THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

W. JOHNSTOUN NELSON NEALE

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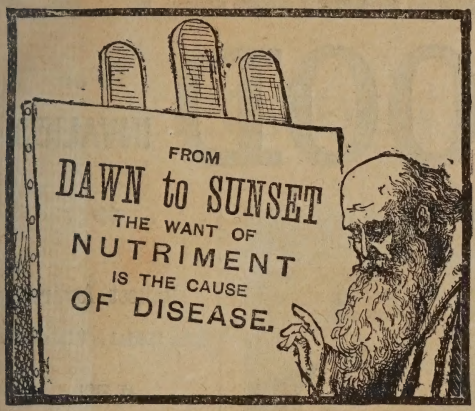

The most truly Living Body is the *most* active in Decay; the more bodily and mental vigour are displayed, the more quickly do the various tissues melt down into substances which are without delay removed by the excreting organs. *The more the Blacksmith Works his Arms and the Statesman his Brain*, the heavier bulk of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen is thrown out by the lungs, liver, skin, and kidneys. Do they then wear them out by this constant friction and drain? No, no—the more the bricks are removed from the old wall, the more new bricks will a good builder put in; and so, provided that the supply is sufficient—that the builder is a good one—the more rapid the drain the newer and stronger and better the body will become.

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"Yours very truly, SAMUEL PENTELOW."

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THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

BY

W. JOHNSTOUN NELSON NEALE

AUTHOR OF "CAVENDISH"

LONDON

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS, LIMITED

BROADWAY, LUDGATE HILL

MANCHESTER AND NEW YORK

1893

Somewhere we have read a short sketch of this author who was a British consul, and wrote a number of novels.

NAVAL NOVELS.

By the Author of "Cavendish."

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.
GENTLEMAN JACK.
THE LOST SHIP.
THE NAVAL SURGEON.
THE PORT ADMIRAL.
THE PRIDE OF THE MESS.
WILL WATCH.
CAVENDISH.

THE

FLYING DUTCHMAN.

CHAPTER I.

Happy they were, and innocent, till love,
Like a sweet poison, tainted their young lives.

"A few more hours," said the prisoner, "and his revenge will be complete! By this time to-morrow night, and I shall have been tried—condemned—and broken! Merciful accuser! could he have his will to the utmost, no doubt that breaking would be upon the wheel. But relentless as he is, he must be content with the spirit of his victim. It is a question, however, who suffers most: the wretch whose limbs are slowly mangled and so left, till in a few days the worn-out frame expires; or he who, with ambition nipped in its strong budding, his prospects annihilated, and his name degraded, must either pass years in bitter struggle to regain a lost position, or, sinking slowly day by day, resign all hope and fortune, quiet of mind, and health of body, to become perhaps a tippler, and so feel the flame of life *go out*. He does not die. This to the fiery soul is *not* dying. It is a decay which antedates the corruption of the grave. This was not the death which I pictured to myself on entering the navy. The swell of victory—the roar of battle—the cheers of

conquest—the warm grasp of comrades—the choking sob—the irrepressible tear of my rude seamen—the glory and the glow of a victor's dying heart—these were in *my* fancy—nay, more, these were in my prayers—when I gave up everything for the service of my country. What an intense feeling of madness overpowers me, when I reflect that these high aspirations have come to this! A lieutenant's cabin, with an armed sentry at its door—a long arrest—the disgrace of a narrow prison for a few more hours—and then—a trial—if such that mockery of justice can be called, where the only object sought is the condemnation of the accused.

"A brief space, since, and whose advancement seemed more certain than mine? whose name stood higher? who more favoured—more applauded—more entrusted? And for what have I made these sacrifices? A fair face! I may well start at this summing up of all that has wrought the change—and that—even that is still as far from being mine as ever—perhaps even more so. But I do not fall alone. Thousands of better hearts than mine have perilled all for nothing more, and found shipwreck on the same coast. And even I, were it to come again, would do the same this very hour. We cannot controul the heart, even if we would. I have staked boldly, and I will win her yet, or pay the forfeit fearlessly. Yes, she is worth it!" said the prisoner, after a brief pause in his sad musings.

Drawing from his breast a miniature, he laid it upon his narrow bed, and steadfastly regarded it with the devotion of one whose heart was absorbed by an intense and overpowering passion.

The dim light that struggled through the railing of his cabin-door, came from a rude lantern on the gunroom table of a frigate, and was every now and then interrupted by the passing shadow of the marine sentinel who slowly paced to and fro.

As the arrested officer gazed on the likeness of his

mistress, contemplation of her expressive features appeared to diffuse fresh firmness through a bosom naturally one of the least pusillanimous or hesitating.

"Could I for a moment despond," said he, resuming his mental philosophy, "possessed as I am of the affection of so dear a being? No, I *must* triumph in the end, if I but remain true to myself. Haughty fools! I will live to put my foot on their necks yet. The days of feudal power are, it is true, gone by; but—thank the stars—I come of a stock never yet rendered *familiar* with defeat. And *who* ever made foes of us and prospered? Though I go through fire and water—or, what is infinitely worse, unmerited shame and disgrace—I *will* live through it, if only for the pleasure of paying them back their own base coin—their own with usury!"

The sound of the sentry on the maindeck, going forward to strike the ship's bell, was now heard. The prisoner listened with the air of one glad to catch any sound that diverted the monotony of his own sad thoughts.

"Corporal of the watch," called the sentry from above, "twelve o'clock! Shall I order out the relief?"

"Ay, at once," replied the soldier.

Eight strokes were suddenly vibrated like a solemn warning through the ship's decks, thence undulating over the calm waters of the harbour in which she was lying. The shrill whistle of the boatswain's mate followed with the slightest perceptible intermission, and then the hoarse dull cry of "Larboard watch!"

The marine, ordered by the cabin sentry, descended, lantern in hand, to the hammocks of his sleeping party, and turned out the necessary relief guard. Rousing up from under the quarter of the launch, the midshipman of the past watch rubbed his eyes, and came stumbling into the gunroom to call the lieutenant of the next; while the quartermaster was heard creeping down the steerage ladder to rouse its midshipmen, and the boatswain's mate to call its petty officers.

They all agreed it was a disagreeable kindness to render a man, and all were still more "agreeable," as Jack says, in bestowing a most hearty blessing on the captain, who, lying comfortably undisturbed in his own cabin, had such a sensitive perception of the services due to his country, as to make every one beneath him turn out to keep night watch, though his ship was lying moored in a secure haven.

Gradually the various discordant sounds of grumbling, swearing, and what not, sank into a profound lull—one bell sounded. Only an hour had elapsed since midnight, and not a sound was heard save the deep snore of the first lieutenant of marines, and the intermittent bickering of two sleepy middies, one of whom could not be induced to quit his blankets, nor the other be allowed to seek them.

"Wilton," said he whose duties were now so nearly over, "do you intend to turn out and relieve me, or must I cut you down?"

"Yes, yes, my dear fellow, in an instant—wait but one instant!"

"O yes, wait! I dare say—and it's now striking one bell!"

"Well, then, a *second* only."

The poor tired fellow muttered something in reply, he knew not what, and sinking on the hard deck, was asleep in a second.

Wilton had turned upon the other side, and he slept also.

Presently the late watcher gave a start.

"What! not out yet, Wilton? Then here goes."

His back is placed under the hammock of his "relief." He gives a sudden lift—a slight struggle is heard, and then a heavy fall—Wilton and his bedclothes are hurled upon the deck. Like Antæus from his mother earth, he now springs up with fresh vigour.

"Take that!" is heard—a scuffle—a fight—some heavy blows, another fall. The corporal runs to the spot.

"Come, gentlemen! come, gentlemen!" says the soldier.

"All right, corporal," says the late watcher, stanching the blood from his nose with a handkerchief, just calling my relief here, that's all."

"The devil have you," says Wilton, sulkily arising, "you've given me a black eye. What are the first lieutenant's orders? Is there any wind?" His cloathes are hurried on—in a few minutes he is sleepily pacing the quarter deck, breaking his shins over every other gun-carriage. His late antagonist is fast asleep. Suddenly two bells are struck. "Thank heaven, there's one hour gone!" drowsily mutters Mr. Midishipman Wilton.

"All's well!" cry the sentries on the gangways.

"All's well! is repeated from ship to ship along the harbour, as the same hour of the night is sounded, and everything becomes as sadly silent as before.

"He is a faithful fellow," said the prisoner to himself, "and would, I doubt not, serve me; but should anything unfortunate occur, perhaps their malice would not stop short of taking his life for his kindness! It *does* seem selfish to risk it; but I would do the same for him, were our stations changed. A few months since, and I saved his life at the danger of my own. Poor fellow! 'tis a hard request to make of him. But the fortunes of war spare no one. If I take not this opportunity, when, alas! shall I ever gain another? Come what will, it must be ventured!"

The prisoner, as he came to this conclusion, arose from the cot on which he had been lying, and slipping on his jacket, the only part of his dress that he had laid aside, stepped from his cabin.

In an instant the sentinel placed over him arose from the chair on which he sat in the frigate's gunroom. The marine was armed with a bayonet. He did not seem to oppose the egress of his prisoner, nor even to doubt its propriety. The act was rather of respectful inquiry. The lieutenant saw this; and, with the

air of one who replies to a demand, said, "I am going on the main deck, Macpherson."

The sentry replied by saluting his cap, and then extending his hand to take the lantern from the table. At a sign from his officer, however, he abandoned his intention, and though his looks expressed some surprise, he did not hesitate at following him. In silence they passed into the steerage, creeping in the dark beneath the sleepers who crowded in its space, and arrived at the after hatchway.

"Macpherson," said the officer, speaking in the lowest tones, "you once expressed gratitude for some little service I was enabled to show you."

"I did, sir."

"Do you still feel it?"

The soldier bowed his head in the affirmative.

"To what extent do you dare go in proof of it?"

"Any, sir."

"Then remain here till I return to you. I am going to see a friend—should any mischance happen to me, and you be brought into a scrape, you had better——"

"Bear it, sir; and well I can do so," said the fellow. "I understand what friend ye seek, sir—the only one on earth that the unhappy have. I am thinking, may be, I would do the same myself. You had better put one or two of these in your pocket," pointing to the twenty-four pound shot—"God bless ye, sir—'tis a sair leap at the best—though I'll not be long perhaps or I'll take it too."

The old Scotchman, as he said this, grasped the hand of his countryman and superior, and folding his arms upon his breast, sat down on the hatchway ladder, with the air of one whom no further misfortune could afflict. For a few seconds the lieutenant regarded him totally at a loss to comprehend his meaning.

"You mistake, my good fellow," whispered he, involuntary smiling as he did so; "a Ramsay destroys his enemy before he lays hand on himself."

"Ay! then you will despatch the old man!" coolly replied Macpherson, turning his head round.

"Nor do I think of that—my errand is a peaceful one enough—wait here—I will return as quickly as——"

"No, no, sir; take your time—you need not fash for me—at the worst, it's only giving back the life you saved."

Hoping that such a misfortune was not in store for him as to entail death on one so faithful, the lieutenant turned away.

CHAPTER II.

Tell not to lovers what young love can dare,
Devotion brave, or soft affection bear.

Watching his opportunity, as the back of the cabin-door sentry was turned towards him, he stepped up the hatchway ladder, and, gliding noiselessly across the frigate's maindeck with his shoeless feet, crouched down in the shadow of the nearest gun-carriage. Fortune, it is said, favours the brave. It is at least a consolatory if not a stimulating creed, and I, for one, shall always be a devout believer in it. In the lieutenant's case the fact was evident. To him time was indeed as the most precious sands of life, and scarcely had he gained his concealment, when the lapse of another half hour rendered it necessary for the sentinel to go once more into the bows of the frigate to strike three bells. The first one had not yet sounded, when the lieutenant, with all the agility of an expert seaman, slipped through one of the gunports beneath the main-chains, and, passing along the channel plates, laid hold of the spare main-topsail-yard. Trusting the weight of his body to the strength of his sinewy arms, he might now have been seen thus suspended over the calm

waters, in whose treacherous bosom innumerable sharks were lurking around for whatever prey they could secure.

As our hero for a moment glanced beneath him, and beheld the dark fin of one of those ferocious monsters protruding from the surface, where the hated creature slowly cruised round the frigate, his muscles seemed involuntarily to relax—the treble rows of serrated teeth to fasten on him, tearing limb from limb—the bubble of the waters, purpled with his own blood, to hiss in his ears—the large and increasing girth of the topsail-yard, to grow too unwieldy for his grasp, as he advanced suspended beneath it—and all the difficulties of his rash undertaking to come upon him with exaggerated force. The third bell struck. It sounded like a knell through the ship, and was repeated over the water. The bitter mockery of the cry, "All's well," sank with an icy chill upon his heart. The mizen-chains were yet some feet distant from him, and if not gained by the time the sentry returned to his post, he would be seen; and then the choice was his own—the jaws of the rapacious creature that seemed to watch him from below, or the persecution of those who thirsted for his blood on board.

"It is for her I risk it!" muttered the officer to himself. Springing onward with the thought, his foot gained the muzzle of the protruding guns—the girth of the topsail-yard again lessened—another second, and his hand grasped the mizen-chains. He was once more in comparative safety. As he paused, in his present not very secure position, to take breath, he heard the marine come back to the bulkhead of the captain's quarters, shake his hour glass to see that the sand ran free, and resume his weary beat.—"If you but knew how near your master is his hated prisoner!" thought the lieutenant; "but pleasure is the bride of peril, and the marriage has its charms."

As Ramsay said this, he tapped gently on the glass

of the half-port, which opened out from the captain's cabin under the mizen chains, where he was now sitting. Twice the signal was repeated, and then our hero, putting his ear to the glass, fancied he could detect the whispering of female voices from within; for, parted off from the larger apartment by a slight bulkhead, was a little berth, just sufficient to hold two cots. To gain a few moments' interview with the tenant of one of which, had the venturous prisoner dared the imminent risks that still impended over him.

"I must take care," said he to himself, "not to alarm them; for should their cries bring Angela's father to the port, all is lost."

Again he listened, and again heard, as he thought, their voices in consultation.—"Surely they will come to the port-window now?— No!" A fourth signal was given; again the voices were heard, but no face appeared. "Perhaps they doubt who the applicant may be—but if awake they will know my voice—and so will her father. But it must be risked. Angela!" said he putting his lips to a crevice in the port-sill, and speaking in so low a tone that, to one not listening for the sound, it might have passed for the melancholy murmur of some sudden flaw of wind.

Still no one came. What should he do?—Every second that flew by, bore, as on the slenderest thread, the lives of himself and the poor devoted fellow who waited for him on board. "Angela!" repeated he, in a louder key.

The face of a young girl, closely muffled in a shawl, now presented itself inside the port, and beckoning him to silence with the finger on the lip, quickly disappeared. In a few seconds she returned, and silently unfastened the half-port.

"Gracious Heaven! Mr. Ramsay, can this be *you*? Why do you dream of coming *here*?—what do you want?"

"Speak low, my dear girl—remember the captain

sleeps only a few yards distant," replied Ramsay. "Where's your mistress?—give her my love, and tell her I come to bid her a last 'good-by' before the trial; for Heaven knows whither I may have to wander after it."

"My mistress knows you're here, sir, and is dressing, as well as she is able for fright. Here, sir, hold this window, that it an't blown down, while I go and assist her."

In a few minutes the soubrette returned; and leaning on her arm was one who, though pallid with fear, and her beautiful figure disguised in the loose robes that her haste had flung around her, certainly appeared sufficiently lovely to form a very fair excuse for the ruin of any one.

As the officer beheld the approach of his mistress, for whom so costly a price was to be paid, he seemed to forget the host of surrounding dangers, and leaning over the port-sill on the gun beside it, pressed her to his bosom with a joy too great for utterance.

Anne, in the meanwile, like a prudent and experienced abigail, had seated herself down by the fragile door of their little berth, where, placing her ear at the keyhole, she listened to the heavy breathing of her mistress's father.

The Captain, soundly sleeping on the opposite side of the ship, little dreamed that his only daughter was clasped to the heart of the man he most detested upon earth, and that, too, in his own cabin.

Vain, weak being! His own harshness had contributed in no slight degree to the defeating of his views; and not even the discipline of a man-of-war, which conquers all things, and is circumvented by so few, could successfully bid defiance to the daring and ingenuity of love.

From the sound evidence afforded by the nose of Captain Livingstone, touching the slumber in which the said officer was wrapped, Anne, who felt much more at her ease, while keeping guard over him, than

if he were keeping guard over her, had time every now and then to turn round and observe the movements of the lovers.

"It must be very delightful," thought she, as indeed many a poor maiden has thought before her, "to have one you may tell all your sorrows to—to say nothing of putting your arms round his neck! Well, I'm sure that Mr. Ramsay takes kisses enough for fifty sweethearts. I don't think I should give mine so many by half; but if he does not take a little more care he'll be tumbling overboard, and then I shall be flayed alive by the captain, I suppose. Please, Miss Angela," whispered she, approaching to within earshot, "Mr. Ramsay had better go now before he's found out, for I'm afraid every moment he'll fall overboard."

To this Miss Angela's most pertinent reply was to clasp him more closely to herself. "Never fear for me," said the lieutenant, "I'm as firm as a rock. But if you're fearful of my falling over, I'll just step inside the port—for, as to going away I hav'nt told your mistress the fiftieth part of what I have to say."

"O no! I dare say not—and never will, I suppose," said the girl.

"Do you think we may venture to let him come in, Anne?" inquired her mistress, laying her trembling hand on the girl's arm.

"Why, ma'am," slily replied the girl, "I don't think we can help ourselves." And indeed in this supposition Anne had but exercised her usual judgment, since, ere she had time to answer her mistress's query, Ramsay was inside the berth, and sitting on the gun-tackle.

CHAPTER III.

Who, gazing on impassioned eyes,
Measures half the time that flies?
Fascination still is near her,
Heaven itself is scarcely dearer;
Over paths with roses strewn
Half the night's already flown!
Must we part from one so dear
Day is bringing grief too near.

A QUARTER of an hour flew briefly away to the young pair, whose joys were thus snatched from grief and danger; nor did either of them believe that more than a few minutes had elapsed. While yet, however, they were in the midst of whispering their mutual plans for the future, a loud cough from the adjoining cabin startled the lady almost to fainting, and did not greatly add to the comfort or happiness of the gentleman.

Anne, however, who had faithfully returned to her post, held up her finger to her fellow conspirators behind, giving notice that Captain Livingstone had awoke; and while Angela, in excess of terror, pressed her cold lips to Ramsay's, the latter heard his superior seize the bell-pull that hung by the head of his cot, and ring for the sentry.

Conscious of that which, if not transgression in his eyes, would be greatly so in Captain Livingstone's, the lieutenant began to imagine that he had been discovered. Could their whisperings have been less guarded than he imagined? Perhaps the old officer might have been lying awake for some time. What would be the result? what had he better do? For the present, however, it required all his energies to prevent the timid girl that rested on his arm from going into hysterics: and if not found out already, he knew that escape would then be utterly impossible.

In the midst, however, of these torturing apprehen-

sions, the sentry entered the cabin. For a minute or two Ramsay's heart seemed to still its pulse, give two or three successive throbs, and cease again.

"Did you ring for me, sir?" inquired the marine.

"Yes," replied Captain Livingstone. "Is my son come on board yet?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then why, you scoundrel, was I not called?"

"I can't say, sir; Lieutenant Livingstone had been on board nearly half an hour when I relieved guard. I had no orders to——"

"Right, right, I left none. How many bells is it?"

"Wants about ten minutes to four bells in the middle watch, sir."

"My son's watch on deck, is'nt it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell him to come here."

"Yes, sir."

The marine here shut the cabin-door, ran upon deck, and having delivered his message to the officer of the watch, followed the latter down to the cabin of the father.

"James, at what hour did you come off from the shore?" demanded Captain Livingstone.

"Twenty minutes to twelve, sir."

"Why did not you come in and tell me the success of your arrangements? I suppose everything is right."

"O yes! everything is right, sir; and therefore, as I could not find that you had left orders to be called, I did not like to wake you."

"Oh! And how have you settled it, then?"

"Why, sir, directly he lands from the court-martial, after being broken and dismissed the service, I learn that we have power to impress him before the mast. The admiral had at first some scruples as to permitting the press-gang to be used, till I stated to him what you told me, and he then exacted a promise that we were not to attempt to take him till he had fairly landed."

"Ah, the old fool! he's always for marring any scheme that isn't as womanish as himself. However, since you've promised, let it be so—and let me once get hold of him before the mast, where a cat-o'-nine tails can reach him, and if I don't cut his liver out', may I be d—d! I suppose the prisoner's all safe below?'

"O yes, sir."

"Ah, very well; good night, boy, and to-morrow we'll do for that scoundrel at last."

"Good night, sir," replied the son, withdrawing from the cabin; and the worthy captain, having indulged in the amiable feelings displayed by the above dialogue, turned round and addressed himself to sleep.

His mind had been too long deadened by the possession of power, to be able to perceive that the greatest scoundrel in the case was himself; while having purposely carried on the conversation with his son in a low tone, that would not have disturbed his daughter had she been, as he imagined, asleep, he had now little conception that the very vigilance of his malice, which in the dead of night had roused him to plan premeditated revenge, had been the means of putting on his guard the victim he wished to entrap and destroy.

Ramsay knew how fully he was abhorred. In defiance of both father and son, he had paid his addresses to Angela, who had come out in the ship from England for a passage—he had bearded them both—had braved all their anger and persecution, and successfully, till in a quarrel with the son he had lifted his hand to strik e one whom a few months' difference in seniority had made his superior.

Luckily the blow was arrested by the surgeon, who stood by, and loved him; nor did the offence take place upon the quarter-deck. But he knew, the moment the whirlwind of his passion had subsided, that he was a ruined man; the opportunity so long sought was gained, and he prognosticated but too surely

the court-martial that was now about to take place; still he had believed that there his persecution must end.

Of an open, noble, and confiding spirit himself, he had not calculated to what extent the dastardly spite of the mean, the base, the cowardly, can go; and when he heard, for he could not avoid hearing, the conversation of Captain Livingstone and his son, he was equally convinced that it could relate only to him, and was thunderstricken at the brutal and perfidious cruelty that it displayed.

As to the poor girl beside him, it seemed to have deprived her alike of sense and motion. She neither moved nor spoke, and it was only from the wild beating of her heart, and the burning tears that trickled from her face on his, that he could tell she lived.

Anne had not only heard every word that had been uttered, but, in the bright moonlight of the tropics, saw everything that passed around her, and was terrified lest the further stay of the lieutenant should lead to his discovery. With all the persuasion, therefore, in her power, she urged him to depart. Nor, indeed, could he differ from her as to the expediency of his doing so. Gently disengaging Angela's arms, therefore, from around him, he placed the weeping girl on her cot, and whispering consolation that he did not feel, and promising a return that he knew not how to bring about, he imprinted a last kiss upon her lips, and in a state of agitation that made light of all corporeal danger, he repassed into the main-chains, and thence gained the main-deck, in the same manner that he had before quitted it.

Faithful to his post, he found Macpherson waiting; and having been absent for nearly an hour, he stole back to his cabin more dejected than he left it, to reflect on the beauty and sorrows of his mistress, as well as to devise some plan of defeating the machinations of his enemies, and warding off the evils of the morrow.

Nor had Macpherson much less reason to rejoice at his safe return. The existence of both hung on one thread: the grateful soldier was responsible with his life for the safety of the prisoner, who, guarded by a sentry throughout the day, was every night consigned to the corporal of the watch, in which capacity Macpherson now sat armed in the frigate's gun-room.

Up to this time the character of the latter had been a riddle, and his history a secret and a mystery to every one in the ship. The day before the frigate sailed from England he came on board, in Plymouth Sound, and volunteered for the marines. No vacancy existed in the ship's party, and the first lieutenant offered to place him in the afterguard.

This he refused. Unwilling to press him, if it could be avoided, the weakest and most inefficient of the party was sent off to the hospital, and his berth given to Macpherson. The commandant of marines at the barracks ashore objected to this, saying that *they* ought to supply the place of the invalided man, and drill the recruit themselves. But to this the volunteer was as obstinately opposed as to the other arrangement.

While the first lieutenant was debating what should be done, and wondering what could be the motives of Macpherson, the captain brought on board his daughter and her lady's maid, as passengers to the station for which his ship was ordered. The frigate sailed at daybreak the next morning, on a four months' voyage to one of our distant colonies, which had been thrown into a state of uproar and confusion by the appearance on their coast of what they termed "THE FLYING DUTCHMAN." As several piracies had been perpetrated at the same time, and even descents made upon the island for pillage, and persons so carried off from it, the government had ordered out Captain Livingstone's frigate to discover what was the roguery in operation. She sailed, and Macpherson seemed to have gained one step towards his strange object, whatever it might be;

while the colonel of marines was left to fume at the contumacy of topsail-sheets

But if the surprise of the officers was excited by the Scottish stranger so pertinaciously choosing the marines for his service, the wonder of the jollies and crew in general was not less called forth by the manners of the man. Gloomy, mysterious, associating with no one; harsh, proud, and evidently acting a part far beneath some former station of life; his only pleasures reading every book he could lay hands on, and smoking by himself. At every turn peeped forth knowledge which none could learn how he acquired, while every attempt to scrutinise his former actions was met by impenetrable silence.

Within a week after leaving the English Channel, he fell overboard one morning, in drawing water to wash decks; and Ramsay leaping after him—for he was unable to swim—seemed to have secured a faithful, however humble, friend for life. On this lieutenant, and daughter of the captain, seemed to be fixed every kind of interest he took in a life, where otherwise he seemed to bear neither share nor part.

On the reducing of a corporal for neglect of duty, Macpherson received the promotion; and the first deviation from the strict fulfilment of its trust was that this night displayed towards the preserver of his life. In many ships the corporals as well as the sergeants of marines are emancipated from keeping watch *as sentries*. The over-caution of Ramsay's enemies had left the usual course for additional security: how much of this they gained we have already seen.

CHAPTER IV.

False Fortune's smiles I envy not the great,
So Heaven redeem my sorrows with *one* friend!

In the last chapter we left our hero safely returned to his cabin, that narrow prison in the gunroom, over which his faithful friend, and therefore we fear we must add his faithless sentry, again watched. As he laid himself upon his cot, his heart still throbbed hurriedly, not so much at the dangers yet before him, as at those from which he had escaped. For, in truth, it is not always even the most fortunate may leave unscathed the lion's den into which they have voluntarily thrust themselves.

He had now leisure to contemplate the gulf before him; but every additional thought devoted to the consideration of its dangers, the more impressed upon him how near the difficulty of escape amounted to impossibility. The next morning was to witness his trial by court-martial. The very word carried with it the fact of the sentence being unfavourable. He was to be tried for offering to strike a superior, and his judges were all to be of a grade still higher. The result was scarcely so doubtful as to need the mockery of justice in attaining it.

"Now," said Ramsay, "I will suppose myself broken and my enemy severely reprimanded. What remains for me but to betake myself to the shore, and there a press-gang terminates my hopes and liberty together—like some wretched otter, which, hunted from the water, just gains the land to die. Ay, but it is at bay. Good thought! and so, if nothing else is left for me, will I——"

Again and again he turned on his sleepless and uneasy pillow, racking his brain to devise some method of escaping the toils so craftily laid for him by his relentless persecutors; but he took thought with himself in vain. No alternative presented itself to him

but submission or suicide; and as for the last, it was never too late to decide on so poor a resource. In this extremity it occured to him that the surgeon, who was the most able of his messmates, might hit on some mode of aiding him, though he himself could not. Resolving, therefore, to summon the son of Esculapius to his counsels as soon as morning fairly advanced, he dropped off into those uneasy slumbers in which the unhappy patient dreams of ever falling, yet is never hurt; or of being devoted to the merciless jaws of some horrific monster, to be found neither on the earth nor in the sea. After freely experiencing this kind of purgatory, he suddenly started up, vividly impressed with the fearful belief of having overslept himself till that hour of the court-martial which left him no time for deliberation. The sudden striking of seven bells, however, reassured him such was not the case; he had barely slumbered four hours, however like an age they might have passed.

The time yet wanted half an hour of eight o'clock; his servant was standing beside him, ready to assist in the operation of dressing, and he at once sent a message to the surgeon, begging the favour of an immediate interview. By the time that Ramsay had gone through the usual operations of the toilet, "old Dolichus," as the surgeon was humourously called by his messmates, stood beside him.

"Well, noble Ramsay, how fares it with thee?" demanded his visitor. "Thou fearest not, surely, the fate of thy gallant Scottish ancestor in days lang syne—a violent death in prison dim. What ails thee? have thou and thy dinner disagreed? Have a caution with this for the future, then; beware of sumptuous feeds. Thou art not the first man whom salt horse and black peas have betrayed. Give me thy fist:—dost thou need most the lancet or the spoon?"

"Boy, leave the cabin," said Ramsay, addressing his servant.

"My dear doctor," turning to his friend when the coast was clear, "a truce to your jokes. I have sent

to consult you in a case where neither spoon nor lancet can avail, unless you can sever my fetters with the one, or convey me beyond the reach of persecution with the other."

"Is it so, then? Truly, my noble Ramsay, these are but small means for a great undertaking. But how haps it thus? Has the complexion of thy fortunes grown so much darker since last evening?"

"Ay, as the night which followed it."

"As how?"

"Thus. I have learnt, no matter how—"

"*No?*" slily interrupted the surgeon, putting a finger on one side of a very long nose.

"None, doctor," responded Ramsay; "but let the intelligence itself suffice—I have learnt—"

"Out of a most agreeable book doubtless—a very beautiful page truly."

"But, doctor, listen."

"As Hamlet says, 'I will.'"

"Well, I learn that on my being dismissed to-morrow from the service, which is the sentence already prepared for me, a press-gang will be waiting for me, that as soon as I land, I may be impressed and brought back on board this ship, to serve as a foremast seaman, where I lately commanded as a commissioned officer."

"Impossible, my boy!"

"You may well exclaim so; but I have too certain and melancholy intelligence of the fact. All that remains for me to do is to see if by any stratagem I can foil these wretches at their own weapons. I only became acquainted with the fact after the arrival of that mean hound, young Livingstone, on board. Since then I have been racking my brain all night to discover some mode of baffling my tormentors; but my ingenuity can devise none, unless indeed it is the last one adopted by the scorpion; which, after all, is, in my opinion, but a poor revenge on wretches who desire no better sport."

"Pooh! it's not to be thought of on this side Bedlam.

The devil makes us feel the weight of his horn, if we can devise no better escape than that."

"If we do, the credit must be yours then; for I have nothing further to devise in it. You, as a good sea lawyer, may be able to hit on something—I despair."

"Then, sir, you do what a Ramsay never stooped to do before."

"True, doctor; I did not exactly mean to use those words."

"I should think not, sir; truly I should think not. Despair is a word for fools, as suicide, I told you lately, was for madmen. Impressment is it they resolve on?"

"It is."

"Has the admiral yet consented, do ye know, to the issuing of the warrant?"

"Yes, he has, though with great reluctance; and that on the strict understanding that it is not to be put in force till I am fairly landed."

"A blot on his escutcheon for that same! He who with the power of prevention in his own hands, and an uninterested party, can suffer wrong to be executed towards another, is only, in my opinion, removed from the guilt of the perpetrator by being a criminal of a deeper dye. Vacillating old fool! It *is* enough to stir our blood when creatures such as these command us. Now to our task: no doubt, you say, remains as to the correctness of your information?"

"Not a shadow," replied Ramsay, smiling.

"Good; the first thing to be done then is to consider who are the exempted parties from the operation of this cruel outrage of the constitution, and see if we can put you in the position of one of these."

"And who and what are they?"

"Wait here but a minute, and I will bring you the last act of exemptions. Ih ave the atrocity in my cabin, which I keep much for the same reason as we do vipers in a bottle—for their curiosity."

"Ay, but they are caged like me, though not for

fear of their teeth; so methinks you might have left out your injunction to *wait* for your return."

"I only did it, my boy, because, like my vipers, you are in such overflowing spirits."

"Too bad, doctor, too bad; I thought so old a Joe had been too tough for your table."

"Sir, you mistake the nature of that food, which, like other *game*, is always the better for keeping."

In a few minutes the doctor returned from his cabin, and taking the desired book from his pocket, said, "I think I have found out the mode of setting these fellows at defiance after all."

"My dear doctor," returned the prisoner, taking his hand, "where will be the end of the numerous obligations you have put me under?"

"I care not where, my boy, so long as they leave you happy; but listen. This is my plan: 'Referring to the bond,' as Shylock hath it, I see I am not mistaken in supposing that both masters and mates of traders are privileged persons, as far as regards the infamous operation of the press-warrant. All that now remains for us to do, is to get, therefore, some appointment for you in one of these capacities."

"If that be my only chance, I fear my fate is sealed. Consider the chances of obtaining such appointment betwixt this hour and four o'clock this afternoon, by which time, in all probability, I shall be turned adrift, to help myself as I best can."

"And what of that? 'Is there no balm in Gilead?' —and hath not my people a physician? My life on it, I manage the matter by that time."

"*You*, doctor?—you forget you are a prisoner, only in a little less degree than myself—your evidence is material on the trial. Depend upon it you will get no leave to go ashore till your words have been made to condemn your friend, and your power rendered useless to aid him."

"If thou sayest sooth, then am I a Dutchman;—

and that, believe me, is against all ocular evidence, or my father had a marvellously great demand for bait in my young days, with a wonderfully little conscience as to where he got it. No, no—descendant of the immortal Allan! if we have no 'gentle shepherd' to do us a good turn, the wolf shall want his sheep, I hope, for all that. I have a trusty friend on shore, who would venture something to serve me. By good luck he is not greatly in harm's way of either captain or admiral; so I'll write, and charge him on his fidelity to run, haste, fly, nor stop by the way; but to dun, harass, and persecute the shipowners each, all, and singly, till he has done my bidding. I can send my message by my trusty bottle-washer and associate, who shall act with the quickness of Mercury. Be thou only silent as night upon the subject."

"Ay, or the grave either."

"Good!—then you may safely rely on me; and now let us arrange a signal or two. As soon as you see me with my hair brushed up straight on end upon my forehead, 'like quills upon the fretful porcupine,' don't be alarmed, most noble Thane, for then you shall know I have your new commission safe in the unfathomable recesses of my pocket; so incontinently clap your hand upon the seat of learning,—which Horace insinuates to be the proper name of that tender region just below the waistcoat,—crying out, 'Please you, most learned president, I have the mulligrubs,' or any other well-sounding complaint; but obtain an order for my attendance, and I will order thee a private examination, discover the expediency of prescribing a piece of paper, and a glass of cherry-bounce, and so return you to the custody of the provost-marshal, in a condition to defy the pope, the devil, and pretender. Now we have been talking long enough to excite the first lieutenant's suspicion; so, on going into the gun-room, I shall, *as in præsenti*, which means, in the presence of one Midas, order my assistant to compound for you a *haustus*

nugarum, or one ounce of noisome cask-water, to one dram of powder of post; which, when you have carefully shaken together, you will be pleased to—"

"What! swallow it, doctor!"

"No—throw it into your wash-hand basin. So God prosper thee, and *vale!*"

The surgeon extended his hand, which the young lieutenant shook most gratefully, after which the former, in the presence of his messmates, and in most learned terms, ordered the said *haustus nugarum*. The gun-room mess, sat down to breakfast at the exact period of eight—none of them, the doctor excepted, feeling very comfortable or happy, and all firmly believing that in the mind of the poor prisoner anxiety had brought on absolute illness. In a few minutes the gun-room boy appeared with the draught.

"Is that physic?" demanded the first lieutenant, who was a most thorough-paced toady and spy of the captain.

"Yes, sir," replied the boy.

"Bring it here then, sir. I want to taste it."

"Taste it, my dear boy," said the doctor. "Lord bless me—I never had the least notion you were fond of physic for breakfast, for I have plenty, even nastier than that, down in the cockpit. How much would you like to have? Steward, bring the first lieutenant a quart basin."

"Sir, I'll thank you not to venture any of your ill-timed jokes on matters of duty. I tasted the medicine, because it was my duty to see that nothing in the shape of laudanum was administered to a prisoner awaiting sentence of court-martial. However, I find it is not that,"—using his handkerchief with a shudder at the abominable flavour of the draught.

"No, faith," quoth the doctor; "I should think it is not; if you only knew what you'd been drinking, you would require little breakfast."

This speech, which was uttered in an affected low tone, as if to escape the ear of the prisoner, had so

nauseating an effect on the first lieutenant, that he was obliged to rise suddenly from the table, and hurry upon the deck, amidst the laughter of them all.

"That's a dose for him at any rate," quoth the doctor, "if he never get another."

CHAPTER V.

Taint but bright Justice at her sacred spring,
The stream diffuses poison and not health.

Little time did the doctor of the frigate lose over his breakfast, on the morning of which we are writing. Hastily quitting the gunroom, he repaired to the cockpit, and sending his assistant to dress for the shore, despatched in his own person the various compounds that required to be dispensed for the sick of the frigate. This matter over, which, by the way, is never a very ceremonious one on board of a man-of-war, old Dolichus, who was rather inclined to obesity in his figure, waddled away to his cabin, to indite the note to his trusty friend on shore, having spared in this, no degree of earnestness which could further the purpose in view. This being carefully sealed in a couple of antelopes, (as the hall-porter of the Union Club expresses it,) to guard against accidents, the doctor repaired on the quarter-deck, snuff-box in hand.

"Well, doctor, what do you want?" said the first lieutenant, as he took the sweet pinch offered to him, yet knowing, nevertheless, that the box was rarely or ever volunteered, unless the proprietor had some favour to ask in return.

"What do I want?" reiterated the surgeon; "nothing very particular—only a little point on his Majesty's service. In making out the sick list this morning, and giving attendance thereto, as my friend Six-and-eight-

pence would say, I find we are completely out of a very necessary medicine, so I came to speak to you relative to sending Bathurst, my assistant, on shore for some."

"But how can that be? In ten minutes *you* will have to start for the guard-ship, where, as you know, your testimony is important."

"True, my dear fellow; but then you see, testimony, evidence, and the like, form one of those classes of subjects on which the law will allow you to have no assistants whatever; so that *job*, I fear, I must endure myself."

"You know that I alluded only to the ship being left without medical advice."

"O, bless her old timbers, is that all? I've been giving her plenty of that ever since the day I joined, saying, whenever I've gone over her old sides, You'd better go below, my dear, before I come back again; but all in vain; so I begin to fear that she's as deaf as a post. No, no; I've gone through all the duty till this evening, and don't think I'm so bad a disciplinarian as to permit any one to fall sick between hours. A pretty enervating state of luxury we should then be got to."

"Well then, send him;" and the lieutenant, tired of being badgered, turned to some more amusing part of his office.

In less than five minutes from the obtaining of this permission, the assistant surgeon was on his way to the shore,

"Inshallah!" muttered the surgeon, as he watched the departing boat, "there is one chance the less for these sons of tyranny; and if our 'gentle shepherd' be not a merchanter before a morning more be grown to a noon-day, I'm mistaken in my friend—but that's not likely."

While Vulnerabilis was thus congratulating himself on the success of his schemes, his arm was touched

by one of the side-boys. "The boat's waiting, sir, to take you on board the flagship for court-martial."

"Has the prisoner's boat then started, boy?" demanded the surgeon.

"No, sir; it will follow you."

"Come doctor, doctor; the moment of starting's past."

Thus admonished, the surgeon stepped over the side into the cutter, in which were waiting such of his other brother officers as, having witnessed with himself the the transaction that gave rise to the trial, were now with him called upon to give evidence of the same.

Having shoved off from the frigate, and gained some hundred yards ahead of her, they perceived the prisoner, still under guard, descend into a second boat, which put off to follow them, while the captain and his wretched animal of a son, the cause of all the evil, formed a third party in the gig of the former. Punctual to the hour of nine the court-martial assembled, and the necessary forms having been gone through, this wretched mockery of justice proceeded.

In the first place, Lieutenant Livingstone had applied for a trial on Lieutenant Ramsay, for offering to strike him. The application being granted, the father of the prosecutor was named as one of the judges, from the paucity of captains then in harbour not otherwise making up the necessary number. On the other hand, Lieutenant Ramsay demanded a court-martial on Livingstone for unofficer-like conduct. This also was granted, and the same judge, for the same reason, remained among the rest to try both causes. The formalities of opening the court having been gone through, the witnesses were called, and, from amid all the tedious delay and prolixity of court-martial examination, this was the story to be inferred from the evidence; in the first place, that Mr. Ramsay being one of the officers of the frigate, and introduced by her captain to his table, had there for the first time

encountered the captain's daughter, and became attached to her: that he had afterwards seized every possible opportunity of ingratiating himself in her favour. Nor did this, in the mind of some parties, appear to be anything like the worst point of the case. Not only had Ramsay attached himself to Miss Livingstone, but infinitely greater crime in him, had found some method of inducing the lady to return his affection.

It next appeared that Angela's brother, having taken great exception to these proceedings, lost no opportunity of remonstrating with either party, without producing much effect beyond that of greatly increasing the treasonous affection of both. That finding this to be the result of his labours, he had ventured on still warmer expostulations, calling the suitor a damned puppy, and using other expressions equally expressive of the prosecutor's regard, and the desire he entertained of the prisoner's alliance; on which the prisoner, in contempt and defiance of the well-known articles of war, had, for the purpose of personal violence, "raised his hand against his superior officer." For all of which charges, the most irrefragable testimony having been adduced, Lieutenant Ramsay was broken, and peremptorily dismissed from the service of his Majesty.

The two parties now changed positions as prisoner and prosecutor; and the same testimony having been delivered in a slightly different way, Lieutenant Livingstone was dismissed the service in consequence of ungentlemanlike language. In consequence, however, of the *great provocation* he had received he was forthwith reinstated, with much admonition how he should in future guide himself. The honourable court now broke up, fully satisfied of having in every way discharged its duty according to its oath, but more especially the father—the mild, the amiable Captain Livingstone, whose only wishes and intentions towards the prisoner were now merely to "cut his liver out,

and—nothing more." On Ramsay the blow fell with less violence than his enemies had expected. They knew not, in the first place, how fully he was prepared for the stroke, nor, in the second, that his whole faculties were absorbed in preparing to escape the deeper gulf into which it was the firm resolve of his enemies to plunge him. Anxiously had he looked from time to time at his faithful friend, the surgeon's head, but the quills did not yet bristle on "the fretful porcupine;" and when the court broke up, he found himself standing solitary and avoided. Around young Livingstone he saw several of his late messmates crowding forward, to offer him their slavish and hypocritical congratulations—men whom he had often heard condemning the same creature behind his back, for all the meannesses under heaven. His father also, and several of the other members of the court, came forward to shake hands with and take him below to luncheon; while on Ramsay the only looks bestowed were those of cold indifference or half-concealed contempt; and this from many who, in the sunshine of his day, had basked and laughed with him, ready to receive any favour or obligation in his power to grant. His blood boiled fiercely in his veins as he witnessed these sad proofs of human littleness. But then, thought he, it will be the same in all times while the abject species shall endure, and they are only fools who expect aught beside. What says the immortal Shakespeare?—"Men's eyes did scowl on Richard—no one cried, God save *him!*"

As these bitter reflections passed through his mind, he questioned of himself what should prevent him from stepping forth and hurling insult and defiance in his late accuser's teeth, now that the bonds of the service no longer held him down in slavery. In another instant he had done so, but the thought of her to whom he was betrothed intervened. That reflection convinced him than any mean and despicable triumph over himself

should be permitted, rather than that he should provoke an encounter which might end in his taking her brother's life—an accident that might place an insuperable barrier between himself and the object of those deep hopes and strong affections for which he had already not only perilled but lost all. Mustering all his fortitude, therefore, to receive with the panoply of scorn the keen arrows of desertion, he looked at his watch with that feverish anxiety which is the first offspring of misfortune. "What if even my tried old friend should waver now! we know not who may fall away from us till the hour of trial comes. If the appointment, for which I am so anxious, should not be obtainable, then am I indeed lost; yet if it were, surely by this time I should have received it. At any rate I can linger here no longer. I suppose I must, therefore, go through the form of removing from the frigate those few things which another hour may witness carried back, like myself, by force."

"By your leave, sir, if you please, make way." These words, pronounced in a loud authoritative tone, as if they came from the lips of a man wholly unsubservient to any control, save such as pleased himself, came upon the ear with a sudden surprise, and strangely contrasted with the low sickly whispers of the thronging underlings, who as they had no voice for the acknowledgment of a soul, took care to put as little soul as possible into their voice. The accents, however, struck more sharply upon Ramsay's senses, and, turning round, with delighted eye he beheld make toward him a portly figure, whose topnot stood as perpendicular as the back of a drill-sergeant. Many members of the court had not retired, and anxious to commit his friend as little as possible, Ramsay did not intend to recognise his messmate by more than a private look; but the other, elevating his voice into a still louder key, strode forward with glowing features and outstretched hand, saying, as he greeted the late prisoner with a

friendly shake, "Ramsay, my dear boy, I congratulate you on being a free man at last—how are you?"

Had the Palladium, as of old, in Troy, dropped down among the surrounding bevy, they could not have viewed it with more utter surprise than they did this audacious outbreak of friendship and good feeling in a spot whence both seemed, by universal consent, to have been banished. Had the gift of empires been in Ramsay's power, the noblest of them all had been his friend's—so dear to us in adversity becomes that fidelity, the value of which in our prosperity we had scarcely known. To this, however it should also be added, that had Ramsay possessed wealth and empire beyond that which mortal has ever yet owned, no gift, however costly could have brought to the bosom of his friend half the satisfaction then glowing in it from the knowledge of self-worth—no idle dream of ill-based vanity, nursing itself in the belief of virtue, which the first rude touch of affliction would dispel; but the inefaceable consciousness of one who has fought the good fight, and stood firm when all beside have fled.

According to agreement, Ramsay at once complained of severe indisposition, and the surgeon, taking him into the unoccupied cabin, beyond that in which the court-martial had been held, was no sooner satisfied of their being alone than he put into his hand an appointment as captain of a merchant brig then lying in harbour. Some difficulty had been experienced in obtaining this but, as the surgeon said, he had placed the matter in the hands of one whose every effort had been excited to attain the end in view. With eager eyes, and a voice so agitated as almost to prevent the expression of his thanks, Ramsay ran over the paper.

"Then, with this, doctor, you think I may venture without a fear."

"Venture? ay—there—no thanks. You will find me ashore to-night at my usual rendezvous—so let us be content then to drink better luck for the future;"

then opening the door he said aloud, "Perhaps you will wait till the surgeon can send you something." Ramsay obeyed this hint, and presently received a couple of drachms of red lavender in some sugar and water, which, after all the anxiety gone through, did him at least no harm.

CHAPTER VI.

Ah! what can a courageous heart avail
When cunning's aim and poison'd darts assail?

With a proud and honest heart did Ramsay now commit himself to the boat that was to bear him back to the frigate, to obtain his various luggage, &c. Here a fresh indignity had been thrust upon him. The vacancy in the ship's number of lieutenants, caused by the court-martial, had been filled up by the admiral's clerk, within a few minutes of its taking place, on a commission signed by the admiral the day before the trial; Ramsay's vacancy being thus given to one of the commander-in-chief's protégés. This young man Captain Livingstone had seen beforehand. He knew that the appointment was to be his, and he was ordered, so soon as his commission should be filled up, to repair on board the frigate without a moment's delay. This he did; and until Ramsay's things could be removed from his late cabin, those of the new officer remained on the main deck. These Captain Livingstone espied the moment after he came on board, and learning the cause of their being there, gave instant orders to have Ramsay's trunk's and other property turned out pellmell upon the lower deck; with this addition, that if the unfortunate owner did not appear on board within half an hour, they were to be thrown overboard. That such would have been their fate too,

no one who knew the character of the captain could doubt.

Fortunately, as Ramsay thought, he himself arrived ten minutes before the expiration of the specified time. He found many small articles of his property stolen, and the whole tumbled over into the dirt and dust of the lower deck—all of them injured, and not a few spoiled by the treatment. "Thank heaven!" muttered he, "I am nearly out of their power now, so it is not worth while to grieve over this abject, petty act of despicable meanness."

A shore-boat was already waiting for him alongside. Into this his traps were quickly handed, and he followed the last parcel. Among the seaman and junior officers were many who loved him, not only for his bravery, but many acts of kindness, any opportunity of doing which he had never neglected. Many of them crowded round the gangway, and, had the captain been absent from the quarter-deck, would doubtless have testified it in their own rough way; but now no one dared to step forward; and indeed Ramsay would have been greatly grieved if they had done so, since no one knew better than he, how great would be the animosity which such a step would draw down upon themselves, and how unavailing the tribute of kindness to himself. He certainly did look round to see if any of his messmates were there. Not one, save the officer of the watch, was to be seen, and *he* was busily engaged in looking in the opposite direction.

On his way from the lower deck, Ramsay had looked into the gunroom, and seeing no one, of course concluded that they were all on deck. He now knew that they must have retired to their cabins; and as for the surgeon, he had remained on board the flagship to dine. Thinking that such faint-hearted sycophants well deserved the despot that commanded them, he was about to step over the side, when a tiny hand was put forward in his way, and a youthful voice said, "Good bye, Mr. Ramsay. I wish you every happiness."

Ramsay looked down, and, as he did so, perceived the youngster of his watch, a boy of scarcely fourteen years, whose native nobleness of heart had so immeasurably shamed his seniors. Grasping the lad warmly, he contented himself with looking the gratitude he felt, and descended to his boat; for he was fearful that, had he spoken, the captain's attention would have been drawn to what might otherwise have escaped his notice. It was a good but vain precaution. Before he had gone a hundred yards from the ship, he turned and beheld his little friend Beverley at the mast-head. His heart too truly instructed him as to the cause of this punishment, and cursing the tyrant in his soul, he directed his attention towards the shore.

As he approached this, he beheld, near the landing-place, waiting there, one of the ship's barges. Lieutenant Livingstone was sitting in the stern-sheets, and her crew were fully armed. "Well do I know your object, my good gentlemen," muttered the ex-lieutenant to himself; "but I trust you will find yourselves outwitted." Fiercely did his passions boil in his bosom, as he thought of the perfidious cruelty intended towards him; but he determined to give no provocation to outrage in his own conduct, and to meet theirs with cool contempt.

As the boat drew up near the barge, he saw that she did not contain her regular crew—men whom he well knew from their having often fought under his orders—but a collection from among the greatest vagabonds in the ship, against many of whom he had, in the exercise of his duty, proceeded with rigour. The midshipman of the boat, too, was a coarse, brutal young man, who had once, at his instance, been disrated for drunkenness on duty.

Ramsay quickly perceived the drift of all these manœuvres; but, taking no notice of the matter, he landed himself, and proceeded to help the boatmen in getting out his luggage. While so doing, Livingstone

quitted his barge, and his crew following him, he no sooner perceived that Ramsay's last chest was landed, than, drawing his sword, and pointing to the late prisoner, he exclaimed, "Seize that man, and handcuff him."

Two or three of the seaman rushed on Ramsay as this order was given. "Back you scoundrels!" cried he, levelling the first man at his feet. "What does this outrage mean, sir?" addressing himself to Livingstone.

"That you are impressed in the king's name," replied the latter, while his men gradually circled round him.

"As for impressment, from that I am exempt. Here are my papers as captain of the British trading barque, Elizabeth, now lying in this harbour."

"What!" cried Livingstone, perfectly taken aback, as Ramsay, with a smile upon his countenance, held forth his protection for a perusal.

For an instant there was a dead pause. Suddenly a hand was thrust forward, and ere Ramsay could conceive the possibility of such an act, the papers were snatched from their possessor, and torn into a thousand pieces. That this atrocious act was perpetrated by the midshipman of the barge, Ramsay had no doubt, for he knew his hand. No time was, however, given him to deliberate on his own conduct. The destruction of his papers at once pointed out to the lieutenant the mode of carrying his iniquitous purpose into execution, by feigning entire disbelief of their having ever existed.

"Seize him, my men—seize him, my men—seize him—his papers were all a lie!"

"Death to the first man who attempts this violence!" replied the prisoner, furious at his treatment.

Snatching from the hands of one of his boatman a splendid service sword, with which he had often led on some of the very shipmates who now attacked him, its glittering steel soon circled round the head it was so well accustomed to defend; and the seaman, who

knew both the weight of that, and the arm that wielded it, stood a moment back.

"Forward, and seize him, cravens—forward, and seize him!" shouted the lieutenant, no way anxious for the honour of doing the deed himself.

"Don't you hear the order?" repeated the midshipman. "Forward, you blackguards!" and he threw himself in the van attempting, as he did so, to strike down his foeman's guard.

Ramsay received the blow near the hilt—a slight turn put by the midshipman's cutlass—and in the next moment his own was buried in the fellow's bosom.

"Now then, my men, now's your time seize him —seize him from behind."

But ere this order could be obeyed, right and left swept the sharp steel of the enraged lion, and death-strokes fell at every blow.

"Close on him, all of you at once, and beat down his guard," cried Livingstone, unintentionnally drawing within reach.

Forgetful of his former feelings as to his sister, the hot blood of our friend no longer allowed him to make such nice distinctions. Dashing forward, he aimed a blow at the lieutenant's head, but it only reached him sufficiently to lay bare the face with a most ghastly wound, from the eye to the chin. Before he could recover himself a dozen seamen sprang upon him, and he was again a prisoner.

CHAPTER VII.

What voice can whisper comfort in this tomb?
The gloom of death and worst of life combine
To try my courage and distract my soul.

MANY are the men who are moved by dreams; but there are even a few so desperately unhappy as to have

trust in dreams. Of this small but sorrowful number, our hero—*late* Lieutenant Ramsay—was one. Consciousness revisited him. Alas! in what condition? Manacled hand and foot—the gore yet slowly oosing from the half-cut, half-contused wounds on his neck and forehead, which he had received when struck down—stretched on some wet, hard substance, and in utter darkness lay the former possessor of the royal commission, the gallant and accomplished descendant of one of the noblest and most chivalrous families in the kingdom. On first awaking from insensibility, he closed his eyes once more, muttering, "A dream! it must have been some horrid dream." Still the more blessed reality, for which he hoped, came not. He heard the indistinct hum of voices, and tread of feet above his head, and, one by one, memory supplied each painful link in the heavy chain which bound him. His late trial—that of his opponent—the varied award made to either—his receiving his appointment to the merchant brig—his passage on shore—the landing—the closing round him of the press-gang—the pleading of his exemption—the base act of infamy, of oppression, that destroyed the only evidence of his immunity—the flashing of swords around his head—the death-stroke and thrusts his desperate arm had wielded—some sudden pain, and then a vacancy, which darkness and despair filled up. Doubtless he had been carried on board the frigate; but, surely, in such a case, they would have taken him to the cockpit for his wounds, or, since he was to be in irons, have placed him on the main-deck. Could it be possible, then, that he was not on board the frigate? He listened. No; he distinctly heard the noise of the ship's company on the lower deck above him—the rippling of the water alongside; and by the motion, he was not only on board a ship, but a ship at sea, though in calm water.

Where could he be? With difficulty, from extrem faintness, loss of blood, and the irons which bou

he began to examine the hard substance on which he then lay.

Scarcely had he begun to turn over the hard heaps beneath him, when the truth at once flashed upon his mind. He had been thrust into the coal-hole—the common receptacle for every culprit among the worst of the seaman, and which, on board a frigate, is sometimes made to do the duty of "the prison." While reflecting with indignant thoughts on this mean outrage, he heard some one essaying to cast loose the padlocks that confined the hatch of his horrible dungeon; for, nearly filled with the firewood of that hot climate, it was necessarily swarming with cockroaches and vermin, and doubtless, had it been carefully examined, a scorpion or two. As soon as the hatch was removed, the ergeant of marines and master-at-arms appeared, one of them calling out, "Below there!" It was not until the hail had been several times repeated that the prisoner's voice gathered strength sufficient to be heard in faint reply. On being told to rise and get up to the lower deck by the notched perpendicular beam which served for a ladder, Ramsay found himself so utterly unable to move, that his visitors were obliged to get a lantern and descend to assist him. As soon as the light made its appearance in this dismal place, the cockroaches and other horrors, that had been attracted by the warmth of animation to crawl over him, now ran frightened to their cover, while the prisoner, with a shudder and a groan, fainted once more.

Arrested immediately after the rencontre with the pressgang, he had been brought on board insensible, and in that state thrust down into the coal-hole, without the assistant surgeon being allowed to examine one of his wounds: there he remained, happily for him, insensible until the following morning. Even the rude hearts of those now bent over him, accustomed as they were to scenes of tyranny and oppression, could not subdue the emotions of pity and remorse that arose

within them, as they beheld the condition of a gentleman to whom, but a short time since, every one looked up with respect. "A sad business!" muttered the sergeant, as he bent over Ramsay's body, and threw the light of his lantern in his face. The master-at-arms shook his head. He was the superior officer of the two, and in that ship of universal oppression, none knew better than himself how ready her captain was to descend to the base act of espionage, and listening to one malcontent for tales of another. Even the ominous movement of the head was in him an expression of great force, and the sergeant groaned in reply.

The result of this consultation was, that the sergeant ascended to the lower deck, and, by means of a tackle and a pair of slings, the insensible body of the lieutenant was hoisted on the lower deck, and the assistant surgeon sent for. During the process of restoring animation, a message came from the quarter-deck, desiring to know why the master-at-arms did not produce his prisoner.

"Go up to Captain Livingstone," said the assistant surgeon, "and tell him that unless I am allowed to attend to the state of this patient's wounds, I will not answer for his life."

On hearing this, the worthy captain replied, with many oaths, that the assistant was never required to answer for anything of the sort, and that the prisoner was to be forthwith produced upon the quarter-deck, dead or alive.

This was intelligible language indeed; there was no mistaking it. The master-at-arms ordered four stout hands to meet him with a spare hammock on the lower deck, and once more repaired below. Ramsay had returned to life as he arrived. In spite of the assistant's urgent remonstrances, his patient was laid in the spare hammock, and so carried to the presence of Captain Livingstone. The latter no sooner beheld his victim than he poured forth a torrent of abuse and

oaths, and demanded how he dared to resist the king's warrant.

Ramsay feebly replied, as captain of a merchantman he was exempt from its operation.

"You, you scoundrel! who should make you captain of a trader? Where's your appointment."

"You'd better ask the villain who tore it up."

"Whom, sir, do you mean by that name?"

"The mate."

"Dead men tell no tales, sir, as you know, you scoundrel! though I hope to hang you for this murder; yet how should he be able to tear up that which you, a close prisoner, never could have been able to obtain? Who got it for you, sir?—tell me that."

Ramsay was not a likely man to commit his friend; so closing his eyes, as if he had once more relapsed into insensibility, he replied nothing to the oaths and threats so plentifully showered over him; till Captain Livingstone, in a fury of despair, ordered him to be taken below, and his name enrolled on the ship's books as landsman, and in the quarter-bill as among the main-top men,—this being the uttermost that his present vengeance could effect, until the re-established health of the prisoner should allow him to wreak it on his person as well as mind.

In the night which had elapsed since the seizure of Ramsay, one or two important changes had been made in the ship. Fearful that the whole measure of his revenge could not be so easily obtained upon the prisoner while the same ship contained the daughter who was so much attached to him, Captain Livingstone had put that young lady and her servant on board a frigate which was to follow them. In order, however, that she might not feel the loneliness of this fresh arrangement, young Livingstone made a temporary exchange into the same ship. This, moreover, had the additional good effect of seeming to result from a feeling of delicacy on his part touching the late

court-martial—a sentiment he was about as likely to trouble himself withal as was Mr. John Ketch of Newgate.

Fully trusting in her lover having had skill enough to baffle his pesecutors, it was not until some days after his capture that her wretched brother communicated to her the afflicting intelligence. He did it after mature deliberation, hoping that she would feel her lover to be thereafter far too deeply degraded to rise again in her esteem. He knew little indeed of women, to make so erroneous a calculation; but he lived long enough to reverse his opinions. The wound which he had received in his brutal office, though not dangerous, was one of the most disagreeable he could have received. Up to this period he had not been without considerable belief in his own supereminent beauty of countenance; but a man with half of his nose cut away! even *he* could not help reflecting it would have been *some* drawback to Apollo.

One other change still more deeply affected our hero than either I have already mentioned. Captain Livingstone, though without absolute evidence, was perfectly convinced in his own mind that the surgeon alone could have procured for his friend Ramsay the appointment as merchant captain; and on the surgeon he was resolved, in some substantial shape, to let the whole weight of his wrath fall at the earliest moment. As these thoughts passed through his mind, it seemed to him that the present was the most propitious time. The doctor imagining his ship would not sail till day break, was yet cracking, as he thought, a jovial glass on board the flagship. What should prevent his taking an early start, and leaving the independent vagabond behind? Every *one* else was on board—every *thing* else was on board:—excellent thought!—and the doctor might whistle for his traps.

CHAPTER VIII

Man's heart the virtues of the brute might shame.

In less than an hour the frigate was at sea, the doctor left behind, and Ramsay, now without one single friend, consigned by his hard fate to the iron mercy of his enemies. The first matter that he gave for their employment was the burial of the dead he had made for them the day before. On the succeeding day his irons were struck off, and, though still exceedingly weak, the captain ordered him to be sent to his duty. His remonstrances against the injustice of his impressment were treated with contempt, only equal to that meted out to his own person. He saw that his only resource was to bend to the storm, and bide his time. Meanwhile every device, on which the vilest ingenuity could fasten for his torture and degradation, was put in practice. In watch, and out of it, he was constantly made to sweep the quarter-deck, polish the brass belaying pins, carronade, monkey-tails, and screws; and, in short, no contrivance was allowed to slumber that might lower him in his own respect, and debase him in that of the ship's crew. The latter had seen him, however, in action, and other trying moments of peril and difficulty. They knew his courage to be invincible, his seamanship to be unimpeachable, and his honour as bright as his sword. These feelings never could by any tyranny be bowed into contempt; but in its room was bred a deep, insatiable feeling of hatred towards the oppressor, and sympathy with the oppressed, which was doomed in due time to bring forth a terrible harvest.

Wherever it was possible, the men voluntarily relieved Ramsay from many of the low duties imposed on him to perform. At first, the greatest part of the crew, whenever they addressed him, touched their hats, and said, "sir." This was severely reprimanded on

the quarter-deck, and all that was left for them was to give him place in silence. With equal judgment and knowledge of human nature, Ramsay, in his turn, never made any of the men his associates or confidents, and, though always kind, never for an instant appeared to forget his full conciousness of his own station.

For a long time no artifice was left untried to bring him into a scrape, that would form a pretext for the only indignation and outrage to which he had not been subjected—a flogging. But so perfectly was Ramsay master of his profession, so guarded in all his acts, the effort was in vain. However disgusting—however low—however arduous or trying the duty enjoined, it was always done. It was clear he was playing some deep game which the captain the more feared that he was unable to comprehend. But he had set his diabolically cruel heart on flogging him; and at once accuser, counsel, judge, and jury, the prisoner had but slight chance of escape. It was evident to Captain Livingstone that he would not obtain his object by his victim's own misconduct. But this mattered little; he must now change his tactics.

The morning after coming to this conclusion, an order was issued that the captains of tops should themselves be responsible if any of their men were behind-hand in reefing and shifting topsails, &c. &c. The next evening fault was found with the maintop men; and well it might be so, for one of the after-guard, a new lad, wholly ignorant of the duties of a seaman, had been suddenly shifted into that division of duty. His name was Martin. His fate had put the whole top behind-hand. In coming in he had fallen off the yard. The first night of reefing sails Martin was not allowed by his shipmates to lay out on the yard at all, but made to conceal himself in the forepart of the tops. The maintop men were the first to do their work the sails went up, and no one was the wiser. The next night, as Martin got up the shrouds; and was about

to repeat the manœuvre, Captain Livingstone called on him by name, and thus, at the word, he was compelled to lay out. In the midst of taking in the reef he lost his footing, and, falling head over heels, came dashed upon one of the quarter-deck carronades a senseless corpse. The captain, who was standing on the next gun, stop-watch in hand, to time the men, looked down upon the shocking spectacle for a moment, and while the bleeding mass still palpitated in the last death throes, coolly said, "See how the blackguard quivers" —and then went on with the duty.

The maintop men, unfortunately, could not take a brother shipmate's death quite so cooly. They got flurried in their evolutions, and the maintopsail yard was hoisted to its full altitude just four seconds after the appointed time. For this the captain of the top was disrated, and Ramsay appointed in his stead. The latter saw at a glance the trap thus laid to flog him for the errors of his topmen, and attempted to decline the rating. This was in vain, and submitting to his fate with the darkest forebodings of the future, he walked sorrowfully away.

Scarcely a day now passed on board this frigate but displayed, in its developement, some fresh evidence of that drunkenness of power which more intoxicates the mind than spirits can the frame. Letters threatening violence of every description were constantly picked up on the quarter-deck, or thrown in the cabin sky-light in the dusk; but Captain Livingstone seemed strong in his determination to prove a most notable instance of the *quem Deus vult perdere*,—the only notice which he took of these warnings of his approaching fate being, if possible, to excel himself in the various arts of tormenting. But most matters in this world have their climax.

One night, at about nine o'clock, the pipe was heard through the decks of the frigate, "All hands reef topsails." A slight squall had been observed gathering

to windward, and precaution in these latitudes being worth every other remedy, this step was taken to meet its fury half way. Quick as lightning the men were at their posts.

"Way aloft!—trice up!—lay out!" were the orders given by Captain Livingstone in quick succession, and as swiftly executed.

"Quick, you rascals, on the maintopsail yard there! quick, you blackguards, will you?" continued the gentle chief, with a few oaths which it is not strictly necessary to repeat, and stamping his foot on the gun-carriage on which he stood: not that he did this from the negligence with which his men were doing their duty; for all the evolutions of the frigate were performed with a rapidity truly wonderful; but from the passion, as unheeded as unavailing, into which it was the custom of the captain to transport himself at every possible opportunity.

Imagining, however, that he should have a better position for this ridiculous demonstration of mental infirmity by standing on the gangway, he jumped off his favourite gun-carriage, which in honour of him bore the sweet name of Brimstone Bess, and striding to that part of the waist-nettings near which the main-tack is hauled a-board, leant back on the hammocks, and commenced on both fore and main tops that raking fire of general abuse, the disgraceful character of which, on the lips of a post-captain is now beginning to be a little better understood.

The peculiar flowers of Captain Livingstone's oratory, or rather declamation, were, however, most suddenly nipped in their stormy bloom, by what, in theatrical parlance, would be styled the heavy dis pleasure of the gods; for while in the very act of rehearsing to the topmen the sundry nice matters that he had in store for their entertainment, a marlingspike was hurled at him from the maintop, and a twenty-four pound shot from the fore. The former, gliding past

his right shoulder, half buried itself in the thin woodwork of the waist hammock nettings, where it quivered in its impotent wrath; while the shot, falling still wider of its mark, bounded about with a racket, distinctly audible above any other sound, until it fell innoxious into the maindeck below.

CHAPTER IX.

Ah! who of hell can doubt, that thinks of thee?

In the darkness of the night, and the pre-occupation of the moment, it was some little time before Captain Livingstone could believe that this combined and deliberate attempt at his destruction was the result of preconceived violence. As soon, however, as this flashed across his mind, back he flew to the quarter-deck.

"Mates and midshipmen, man the fore and main rigging—let not a man pass down from those tops, except as they are called. Mr. Sneak, send for the marine officer—range the marines on the quarter-deck with their side arms—load with ball cartridge. As soon as you hear the word given to belay the topsail haulyards, call all hands. By G— I'll teach these fellows a lesson! They shall soon see who's to be the master—they or I."

With these words down flew Captain Livingstone to his cabin.

"What's the matter? what's happened? what does he mean?" were the questions bandied about among his officers. But no one seemed rightly able to give answer to these queries! some asserted one thing, some another. Alarm and confusion made their appearance where they should ever be unknown—on a British

quarter-deck. The marines were flying helter-skelter below for their arms; Sneak was placing his midshipmen in the fore and main rigging; and just as the topsails were being run up to the mast-head, Livingstone himself put in his appearance, bristling to the teeth with arms, and very much "like the fretful porcupine,"

He had a huge service sash belted round his loins—three pistols stuck in its folds, and another in his left hand—more in the manner of a roaring buccaneer, who finds himself in the midst of a treacherous, motley band, the scum of many people, where every man's nand is against his neighbour, than a gallant English officer in the midst of a devoted and admiring crew, bound to him by the most indissoluble links of superior skill and daring, and each ready to risk a life for the preservation of their leader's.

"Belay the topsail haulyards!" cried Livingstone, as his quick eye detected the tautened leach-ropes aloft, and the accustomed mark on the rope below. The order was obeyed.

"Boatswain, pipe all hands?"

"All hands!" quoth the sullen voice of the warrant officer.

"Mizen topmen down below on the main-deck, and bring up half a dozen fighting lanterns."

Down rushed the mizen topmen.

"What the devil's in the wind now?" muttered one of the lieutenants to another.

"Lord knows!" was the reply. Oh here comes the clerk; don't you see what's up.

"No—what?"

Why, don't you see he's brought the skipper the articles of war?"

O ho! and yonder by the entering port, is one of the boatswain's mates handling something uncommonly like a pair of nine-tailed cats—for those lanterns fling a pretty strong light."

"Mr. Sneak, give me your watch-bill," said the captain, interrupting this side colloquy.

Sneak pressed forward over the tender toes of his brother officers, and placed the required document in the hands of his superior.

"A lantern, Mr. Sneak."

"Mizen topmen, one of you give me a lantern."

"That's right; hold it a little nearer—so—that's it. Mr. Sneak, now who are the midshipmen in the main rigging?"

"Mr. Seymour and Mr. Urquhart, sir."

"Mr. Seymour and Mr. Urquhart, are you in the main rigging?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you allowed any of the maintop men to pass you?"

"No, sir"

"Then call down Augustus Ramsay, captain of the top."

"Ay, ay, sir. Augustus Ramsay, captain of the maintop, come down on the quarter-deck."

"Augustus Ramsay," took up another voice, "come down on the quarter-deck!" Still no Augustus Ramsay made his appearance.

"Where is Augustus Ramsay?" cried the captain, with his usual stamp.

A pause of a few seconds ensued, and then a distant voice from aloft replied, "Ramsay's in the sick list sir."

"No such thing," bawled back the captain in reply. "Where's the senior assistant surgeon? Mr. Liverwort!"

"Sir."

"You have never reported Ramsay to me as in the sick list."

"No, sir; I may not have *written* him down as in the list, but——"

"Let us have no *buts* here, sir—no such a word on

board a man-of-war. You did *not* report him, sir—you know it—that's enough—begone! Has Ramsay not been up, then, at all, during the reefing of topsails?"

"No, sir," cried half a dozen voices,

"Very good," said Livingstone, with a suppressed noise, hybrid between a growl and a grin, and, like the rumbling of a volcano, a sure note of coming mischief. "Who's the captain of the larboard watch?"

"John Herbert, sir."

"True; so he is. Call down John Herbert."

"Here sir," cried the ready seaman; and quick as thought, a figure left the body of sailors, crowded like so many bees upon the shrouds aloft, and John Herbert stood before his unsparing captain, cap in hand—his abashed eyes sought the deck, and the whole glare of half a dozen fighting lanterns pouring their red, strong light upon his stalwart person, pointed it out to the universal gaze amid the darkness, still more increased by contrast.

The honest fellow bore a character universally good throughout the ship, and had done so ever since he first entered her, when he had then received, what he still retained, his present rating. This, in such a craft, it required no ordinary man to keep. In figure he was a short, tough, muscular, and active bit of true heart of oak, who, place but a Frenchman before his gun, and him behind it, would start from it when the trunnions did, and not before—the very type of those inimitable and glorious jack-tars who have made, and ever must make, to those who possess a single thought, the pride, glory, and wealth of Old England.

Whether reflections such as these were passing through the mind of Captain Livingstone, or not, during the pause he made after his last question, I know not; but having looked at Herbert in silence for a minute or two, he abruptly said, "Tell me, sir, who flung a marlingspike out of the maintop at my

head, when I was standing on the gangway during the reefing of topsails?"

This question, which first revealed to the officers the cause of all the sudden hubbub which had ensued, produced among them a general murmur of surprise.

"Marlingspike, your honour!" said Herbert boldly. "If 'twas any but you, sir, who told me it came out of the maintop, I would have said 'twas no such thing. I never heard of it till this moment."

"You scoundrel! that's a lie—I see it is. You must know who it was very well—the thing was done amongst you, and have the truth out of you I will, though I give four dozen to every man in the top."

"You may give me eight dozen if you like, sir; I'm alive to bear it—I can't help that. But this I can tell your honour, if I'd a known of such a thing to be done, I'd a been the first to let you know about it; but in the matter of reefing topsails, I was out doing my duty at the weather maintopsail, earing in Mr. Ramsay's place, and never knew no more that such a thing had happened than the very babe unborn may do at this moment."

"*Mr.* Ramsay, sir? Why do you dare to call *Mr.* Ramsay, sir, to me?—a disrated, skulking scoundrel, that shall get his deserts, if he only lives till to-morrow. I'll let you know what it is to tamper with your captain in this way—*strip!*

Obedient to the word, and with the same sort of submission with which a Turk may be supposed to bare his neck to the bowstring, Herbert laid down his cap on the deck in silence, then off came his "long Barcelona," next his tarry, well-worn jacket, and so on, till his back was bared to the night breeze, and glowing in the torch-like light of the fighting lanterns.

"Quarter-masters, seize him up!" was the next order, and the poor fellow's wrists and knees were immediately secured to the gratings which the carpente

had already rigged; while immediately aloft, no doubt, stood the culprit for whose crime he was to suffer.

"Now, sir—will you give up the name of the topman who flung that marlingspike?"

"Indeed, your honour, I would with all my heart; but I know no more than you do—so I hope, sir——"

"Silence, sir! Officers, hats off, while I read the Articles of War."

CHAPTER X.

Spare not the lash, nor scourge, nor torture spare.
The brave are fettered, and the helpless bare.

THE general and concluding article having been read, and the officers' hats replaced, the word was given—"Boatswain's mate, do you duty."

With a sound that made the flesh of many a stout heart creep, the first lash of nine simultaneous strokes fell on the topman's back, whizzing through the strong breeze that filled the sails of the frigate and urged her dashingly on her course; but beyond the sighing of the night wind through the strained rigging, and the mournful plashing of the water thrown off by her bows, not another sound seemed to be produced by this wanton exhibition of torture. For the stoicism with which it was borne, the sufferer himself might almost have been deemed some flesh-coloured piece of marble; saving that as the arm of the scourger was raised to repeat the blow, there gradually stole over the seaman's honest shoulders the blue livid lines streaked with blood, where the flesh had just been bruised and lacerated, and where the kindred colours of the lantern-light fell strongly terrible and bright.

"ONE!" said the master-at-arms in a deep bell-like tone, well fitted to knell forth the number of those

unjust stripes. No other voice was heard. The seamen seemed to gaze on the unusual spectacle with awe, and the officers with a mixture of surprise, concern, anger, and impotence. But other human sound was there none.

"Whizz!" flew the second lash, and a second number of similar lines were scored on the back of the unfortunate fellow, intersecting at every angle and curve those already so direfully written there.

"Two!" said the master-at-arms—a third, a fourth, a fifth, a sixth, fell—and so on, till the dozen was complete, and the blood slowly trickling down Herbert's back, from points more severely wounded than the rest, stood congealed by the cold air on others, which had more escaped the repeated cutting of the lash. Still not a sound escaped him. He could not even have been noticed to breathe, much less sigh; nor was Indian chief ever more motionless under the tomahawk of a fellow savage. It was as if his indomitable soul disdained to give the slightest proof that the unjust infliction could not all reach the mind, however it might disport its wantonness on the enslaved body.

As soon as the twelfth lash was complete, the master-at-arms moved a step towards the captain, and, touching his hat, reported,

"One dozen, sir!"

"Step forward another boatswain's mate," was the captain's reply. The man who had just given the last dozen resigned his position to a brother executioner. The arm of the successor was already raised to begin the second dozen, when the captain again demanded,

"Will you tell me now, sir, who threw that marling-spike out of your top?"

"I would if I could, sir," replied Herbert, in a coarse, husky voice.

"Do your duty, boatswain's mate," said the captain, cutting off by this order any further explanation in the

matter. Another dozen followed, and again the same question was put with the same reply. A fresh boatswain's mate, and another dozen was inflicted. Still, though barely able to articulate the denial, Herbert still protested his utter and entire ignorance of the whole affair. After thus receiving these four dozen lashes, he was cast off and allowed to retire below upon the doctor's hands.

This case disposed of, Sneak was desired to hold the lantern, that Captain Livingstone might read the next name of the proscribed, and that done, down came Samuel Brown.

"Who threw that marlingspike, sir, out of your top at me, while we were reefing topsails?"

"Don't know, sir," said Brown; "I had no hand in it—know nothing about it, sir, at all."

"Strip, sir!"

Down went Samuel Brown's hat upon the deck, off went his jacket; and the same imperturbable docility as the last had displayed, marked his conduct too, with this addition, that he even went and held up his arm at the gratings, before the command "seize" was given. This last, though, he had not to wait for long; for it speedily came to terminate all suspense in the matter, and he having borne his four dozen with the same silence as Herbert, was, like the latter, cast loose.

Thus, then, one after another, every individual seaman was called down from the main rigging, and received the inquiry as to his knowledge of the marlingspike's fall. Each, however, as stoutly denied any knowledge of it, and each received as many as his strength of frame would bear, the least being favoured with three dozen and six.

The maintopmen being thus summarily disposed of, the midshipmen who had performed the disagreeable duty of sentinels in the main-rigging were relieved, and the peculiar process of Captain Livingstone's justice extended to the crew of the foretop.

It has generally been supposed an axiom of British law, that many guilty should rather be allowed to escape, than one innocent be punished; but in this instance, it was reserved for an English representative of his sovereign to reverse the very spirit of those beneficent institutions, which are the chief boast of our country, and prefer that some forty innocent men should suffer rather than two guilty should escape.

But whatever might have been the criminal views of these men, they showed at least that rude untutored virtue, which alike abhors and avoids the mean treachery of a betrayal; and if any of the large number that night scarified and tormented were in any degree aware of the real culprit, they singly and unanimously determined to endure any pain in their own persons, sooner than avow what would injure a comrade.

Not a particle of information—not even a stray hint to guide him, could Livingstone obtain from the foretopmen, as to who hurled the twenty-four pound shot, any more than the crew of the other top gave as to the marlingspike; and so, having indulged the inhuman and butcherlike cruelty of his nature by a wholesale punishment, he was not in the end a whit nearer the attainment of his point than when he set out; while the complete baffle he had received seemed to have fanned all his worst passions into a more furious degree of activity than ever—a result increased, no doubt, by the seeming passiveness with which his men had submitted to the outrage he had, in the mad plenitude of power, committed on them.

By the time that the last foretopman was cast loose, the ship's time had past one bell in the middle watch, or half an hour after midnight—still the hands were not piped down—still the watch was not called; surely there were to be no more victims for that night! Thrice had the purser been obliged to renew the candles in the fighting lanterns—again and again had the boatswain and his mates to ply their weary arms in

varied turns, as successive dozens demanded their exertions, till at length their strength had been so exhausted as to render it a question whether their last blows were of much effect.

The crew, standing during all these hours of the night, thus inhumanly taken up, were half asleep; yet still there seemed some further barbarity to be wreaked.

"Corporal of the watch!" said the captain soon terminating all doubt.

"The corporal of the watch, sir, is in the sick-list," responded the sergeant of marines.

"Very well, sir—then go yourself, with a couple of your men, and bring on deck that skulking blackguard Ramsay."

At the sound of this name, so full of meaning to all on board, the weary crew seemed again to quicken into life. Surely he couldn't be about to terminate the scene by punishing the broken lieutenant—the wrongly-impressed merchant-captain—the invalid, sick-list man. The question raised deep interest in the bosom of every spectator, and with aroused faculties they waited to see the result.

A few minutes having elapsed while Ramsay was putting on his clothes, he at the end of that space made his appearance on deck, accompanied by the sergeant and a couple of marines.

"Well, you skulking scoundrel!" cried the captain, hailing his appearance with the hoarse, enraged accent of some uncontrollable savage, driven to the confines of madness by the possession of more power than his weak intellect could withstand—"what's the reason, sir, that when the ship's company are piped to reef top-sails, you presume to keep your hammock?"

"I did so, sir, by the orders of the senior assistant-surgeon, who told me to consider myself on the sick-list. The language, therefore, Captain Livingstone that you——"

"Silence, sir—your name is not upon the sick-list—you are a skulker—you have deserted your duty."

"I hope not, sir—and if you will ask the assistant-surgeon, he will tell you that I have only stated the truth.

"The truth, you impudent blackguard—do you mean to bandy me about betwixt you and the assistant-surgeon? There's the sick-list—look at it, and tell me if your name is down for the evening report?"

Ramsay took the book from the captain's hand, and ran his eye over it. "Well, sir, do you see your name, there?"

"No, Captain Livingstone, I do not; but though the assistant-surgeon has made an omission, I hope——"

"Hope nothing, sir! In the king's service there are no omissions. You have been found skulking in your hammock when the hands were on deck, and you should have been doing your duty, and to-morrow morning I must do mine. Master-at-arms, put Ramsay into the report."

"Captain Livingsone," said Ramsay, in the strength of despair assuming a tone that he usually avoided as much as possible, "I have to remind you that I am not legally one of your crew. I was impressed by the most shameful and outrageous violation of all law, and I have only continued to do the duty of a topman to preserve quiet, and avoid creating any disturbance in the ship; but I must beg with every respect for the rank you hold, to warn you, that if, notwithstanding my illegal impressment, you now unjustly punish me for a fault not by me committed, I shall take legal measures against you for any assault that you may cause to be committed upon my person by your orders, as soon as I am enabled to reach England; and you are aware how severe is the punishment for this offence awarded by the civil power—including not only a heavy fine, but a lengthened imprisonment."

"Upon my word, sir! a devilish pretty sea-lawyer

you are! So you presume to lecture me on my own quarter-deck! What is it, you scoundrel, that you want?"

"Justice, sir, is all I ask."

"Justice, eh! Take care you don't get a little more of it than you may like." And Livingstone paused for a few moments in deep thought, as if the mention of Ramsay's appeal to the civil power had awakened unpleasant cogitations. "Now tell me, sir, pray what do you call justice?"

"The discharging from the service one who has been wrongfully compelled to work in it."

"Oh! that's what *you* call justice, is it? Then to-morrow, sir, I'll give you some sort of notion of what *I* call justice. Boatswain, call the watch." And giving Ramsay no time to make any sort of remonstrance against his threat, Livingstone at once descended to his cabin. In half an hour he sent for Sneak, and put into his hands a sealed order, which was not to be opened till four o'clock in the morning, when Sneak was accustomed to rise for the duties of the day. Captain Livingstone also gave orders that he himself was on no account to be called till eight o'clock. The ship was to be continued in her present course, but not to be allowed to exceed the rate of eight miles an hour, while sail was to be shortened and made, according as circumstances might require.

Meanwhile, it being now Ramsay's watch below, he retired to the lower deck, in a state of mind that none might envy. Fate seemed to have delivered him bound hand and foot, into the power of his enemies.

As these terrible reflections came home in the solitude of the night, they conjured up all those dark images of violence and despair, which seem to hold as favourite trysting spots the hearts of the unhappy.

CHAPTER XI.

On fluent lips the wise strict vigil bear
For hate possesses Dionysius' ear.

The words had fallen, not to be recalled—the hands were piped down—the watch alone remained on deck. Cowed and abashed for the time, they retired, it is true, from the sight of their superiors; they hid themselves in the recesses formed by the *bits* on the forecastle, the booms, and the bows of the launch, and all those little nooks, which on a man-of-war's upper deck are sacred as the council places of the crew. Here, as they read in the eyes of each other that common spirit which filled alike the hearts of all, their stern, rough spirits gradually found that vent in expression which they dared not breathe in the presence of their officers. At first a few deep oaths alone gave vent to the boiling anger of their souls; and then as they rapidly became aware that one feeling alone animated all, that feeling was expressed in full and unmeasured condemnation and hatred of the dastardly and despicable act of tyranny they had just witnessed. The misfortunes that alight on courage, and on honour, touch with compassion hearts whose sternness had otherwise steeled them to every sentiment of pity. Not one among them but felt most keenly for the broken lieutenant, for whom the degrading outrage of the morrow was prepared. Rapidly, and with every addition that the feeling of the moment could excite, the rude seamen anxiously recounted the different exploits which they had seen him perform. Gratitude, that rare virtue in crowded cities—gratitude, that beautiful emanation from the Divine Spirit, that partly deifies the breast it hallows by its presence—still lingered with powerful effect in the bosoms of these hardy sons of ocean. Every now and then a pause broke in on the disjointed series of tales that recounted the good qualities of the persecuted

officer, and while one endeavoured to conceal his emotion in a volley of abuse on the oppressor, another would turn his quid, and silently look towards the moon, brightly shining over the frigate, as if the justice and good feeling denied by man to his fellows were alone to be found in a purer region.

"Well, shipmates," at last said one of the petty seamen; it's pretty clear we're all of one way of thinking. 'Tis a shame! I won't swear over the matter, either here or there; for the worst of Billingsgate we could use would never half come up to what I think of the matter. But then again, what's the use of that?—'twill do no sort of good to Mr. Ramsay, though one can't help, as it may be giving a fellow's heart a little head way. Petty officer as I am, if I thought 'twould do Mr. Ramsay any good, I'd go with all my heart to the gangway to-morrow, and take four dozen without winking a toplight."

"So would I!" exclaimed a dozen voices at once.

"Ay; but, messmates, 'twould be no more use than a twice laid chaw of baccy to a cold middle-watcher.'

"'Tis but too true, Ben," responded his auditory.

"But," said one of the seaman, "can we lend him a helping hand any way?"

"Not that I know of resumed Ben; "I'd as soon —ay, for the matter of that, perhaps sooner, see him overboard in a gale of wind, with nothing but a hen-coop betwixt him and Davy Jones's locker, as I would see him now stuck down in the black list without ever having desarved it. When the word with the skipper is 'flog,' you know well enough, boys, that he never repents. 'Tisn't likely then that he'll let off Mr. Ramsay, that he's been lying-by for ever since we came to sea, to catch upon the ground-hop, as it might be. 'Tis a rascally shame, 'deed is it, and for nothing more, as I can understand, than making up to the skipper's daughter—and so he's as a good right to a handsome craft as any lad that has courage to cut one

out from under the enemy's batteries. 'Tis no wonder the young leddy likes the leeftenant. I should think little enough of her if so be she was any other ways minded. I only wish for his sake she happend to be aboard o' us just now—she might cut the clink in quick sticks, though none of us can. Howsomever, boys, this one thing's certain, if the skipper's alive and kicking, by six bells to-morrow forenoon the leeftenant's a flogged man; and that I fear he will be; for I can't see anything in the captain's ugly carcass that should please Heaven to take a liking to him on so short a notice."

"Like enough, man—like enough," broke in the deep voice of the Scotch corporal, who had hitherto remain mute; "but, in my way of thinking, he's a lang, lang journey to go, and both a cold and hot one to get through or ever he wins there. But though ower black for heaven, ye ken there's another place, for which he suits well, sirs, well—and if ever anything should tempt me to a few soft words with the father of evil, it would be for the obligation of his taking home such a bairn. Should he miss his master on the morn—then, boys, mark me—we knows who's laid a claw on him."

"Oh, blurra nouns, corporal—there's no such luck for us!"

"No!" said the corporal in a slow, deep accent, whose thunder seemed to rumble from the deepest recesses of his capacious chest; "we shall see," he added, as a terrific scowl passed over his hard features, dan without another word he arose and went below.

"Corporal—is that you?" said one of his marines, as he joined the main-deck.

"Yes," replied the Scot.

"Then Mr. Ramsay, wants you on the lower-deck."

"Ay, and on the main-deck too."

"Oh, then, some one's told you of it."

"Not they."

"Why, then, how the devil did you come to know it?"

"By the same token that I know sharks are hungry, and must be fed. Out of the way!"

The younger soldier moved aside, and his face bore sufficient testimony to the nature of his surprise at this singular conversation of his petty officer. Accustomed to allow to the latter a degree of intelligence superior to that usually found in a similar station, he could not even thus account for the deep impression made upon his mind by the seeming prescience of the corporal. But he was now chiefly bent on smoking his pipe in the galley and it was not until after circumstances of a mysterious nature had occurred, that the remembrance of these dark words recurred to him.

"Does your honour want me?" demanded the corporal, going to the berth in which poor Ramsay messed, and finding the preserver of his life sitting alone on the chest which served the mess as a general seat, with his head leaning forward on the table, but buried in his hands.

"Ah, my kind friend!" said the broken officer, looking up and and extending his hand to the corporal, "I want to have some private conversation with you—come forward."

As the lieutenant said this, he arose, and going into the bows of the frigate, sat down upon a pile of the seaman's bags, which happened to be lying on the hatch of the fore-magazine. Leaning his back against the foremast behind him, and motioning the corporal to be seated by his side, he drew a packet from under his jacket, and putting it into the corporal's hands, said "As a true and courageous friend, who has done for me more than I can ever repay, I have one request to make of you, corporal."

The corporal made an effort to speak, but his willingness to serve his late superior could only find utterance in a motion of the head. This, however, seemed sufficiently to tell the tale, both of his feelings and his faith, to his countryman, who thus proceeded in the

definition of the favour he required. "The packet I have given you, corporal, contains two letters, one to my family, and another to a lady, into whose hands I wish you to deliver them both. She will then be able to forward to my friends, more easily than is in your power, the communication I wish them to receive. If you obtain no further order from me within twenty-four hours, take the first opportunity of being alone, to open the outer seal of the packet I have given you. The name of the lady to whom you are to deliver the enclosure will then be known to you. I confide wholly in your courage and address, to deliver them at the first opportunity which may offer without any detriment to your duty. In doing this, however, expenses may arise which I do not foresee; you will therefore defray these from this sum of money, for which I have no longer any need."

As Ramsay said this he laid a small bag of Spanish doubloons on the corporal's knee; and while he rose to depart, held out his hand. For a time the marine seemed capable of regarding neither that nor the money confided to his charge. At length looking up at the lieutenant, who still stood beside him, he replied, "How have I had the misfortune of forfeiting your confidence?"

"In no way my good fellow. Why do you ask?"

"Because, sir, these things were better in your own keeping and accomplishment, unless you had intended something more serious than you have yet told me."

"My good fellow, there are some things of which true men are loath to speak, lest their conduct fall under the suspicion of bravado rather than bravery."

"Ay, I feared it was that."

"Not that only, corporal; but there is a degree of confidence that is more embarrassing to a true friend than desirable for him."

"And that's the reason, sir, why I made so bold as

to seek that which you have not offered me. I understand, sir, what you mean to do—I understand it fully;" and the corporal paused solemnly. Then looking up again at the lieutenant—"Is there no other way, think you, of getting out of the bloodhound's toils?"

"None that I can think of. Can you?"

"Yes, sir; it requires but a firm hand and a true heart; and you have both."

"But what, corporal, is your plan?"

"As straight and plain as I hope my heart is. Just put a couple of boarding-pistols in your pocket, and while I call off the sentry at the companion-hatch, enter you the cabin, and never leave it till the scoundrel who grinds you to the dust with his unnecessary tyranny, is as dead as one of his boiled chickens.—Nay, sir, you needn't shake your head; I mean nothing unfair to him, hang-dog as he is, but just to lay one of the pistols on the table, and take the other in your own hand. If fortune is against you, so much the greater pity, but 'tis a fair fight; and if the captain is once pinked, I'll answer for the crew rising—and then the barky is your own."

"My poor, mistaken friend! and what would be the use of the frigate to me, except to hang me? No, corporal; the wrongs and the evils it pleases Heaven to send upon us, we will bear as best the honest-hearted can. The tyranny of the captain can be no justification, in my eyes, for injuring my country and my king, by turning one of their frigates into a pirate. My deep grief arises not for my life—that has been freely offered, as you know, on every opportunity. But I do lament, that with our noble-minded countrymen, for whom all our energies and our happiness are wasted, such a lamentable ignorance prevails as to the extent to which tyranny is carried on in the service, that it will take the lapse of long years to convince them of the truth, and, what perhaps should be more, the sacrifice of

many thousand victims, of which it is only my unhappy lot to be one, No, no, corporal; neither bloodshed nor mutiny shall stain your hands for me; and if no praise may reward or support the struggles of the stanch-hearted in this world, we have still the better faith to think they cannot remain quite unrecorded, or be wholly unproductive of benefit to those who pass through them. If, to save my life thrice over, it became necessary to accomplish the death of the captain, believe me, I'd rather like the coward, of whom I hope I have no part in me, 'die many times.'"

"Your honour is a Ramsay. Time was, they would have chosen another song."

"They would; but had they live in times when high courage and virtue are so differently measured, they would have joined me."

"Well, at any rate, then," said the corporal, averting his eyes from his officer's face, "ye'll do nothing till the last minute."

"Why so?"

"Why, by God's good guidance we may fall in with an enemy, and once come to an action, the black list will be washed white."

"True corporal; but think you that he who has already shown such unjust spite, may not do it again and again till his object be gained?"

"Ay, there, sir, is the sting of the whole business. However, sir, oblige me in this one thing, for, in case of an action, a stray shot might be blessed in making out his discharge, the ship get into other hands, and all be right again."

"It seems to me but a slight hope; but to oblige you—I consent——"

What further the lieutenant would have added we can scarcely say, for a skulking blackguard, who was generally supposed to be somewhat of a tale-bearer, here got up from the foresail bin, in the shadow of

which he had been lying, and rubbed his eyes, as if just awakened from his sleep. But the important part of our hero's communication with the corporal had passed, and so they parted.

CHAPTER XII.

. . . . . Ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight; ere, to black Hecate's summons,
The sharp horn'd beetle, with his drowsy hums,
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

MACBETH.

ONE bell in the middle watch had some time since been struck on board the frigate, on the night which followed the closing of the last chapter. All the reliefs had been served for the next four hours, and many of those who had retired were already fast locked in sleep. Nothing was to be heard below but the creaking of the ship's timbers, as she rolled merrily before the gentle breeze that impelled her rapidly through the rushing waters; while the heavy monotonous tread of feet on the upper deck, as the officers drowsily paced to and fro, inducing a feeling much more akin to somnolence than vigil. Everything on board seemed rapidly sinking to repose. On the starboard side the moonbeams shot in, and playing along the line of guns, as the ship rolled, produced a startling effect upon the sight—now displaying everything with the utmost brightness—now steeping them in the deepest gloom.

It was during these latter intervals that a tall and powerful human figure might have been marked, stealing gradually aft, from the fore-hatchway on the main-deck towards the captain's cabin. At length it reached the mainmast, and there, in the deep shadow of the ship's pumps that were grouped around it, paused as

if for both consideration and concealment. Whether his views embraced the leisure of the former, we know not; but that they completely effected the latter, was soon evident. The sentry looked towards his hour-glass, and hastily shook its few remaining sands, as if joyous that one fourth of his duty was over. Little did he think that to another they were the sands of life which he was hurrying. The last grain passed, the sentry turned his glass, and then, with slow and lazy step, set forward for the galley, there to strike the bell. Unknowing who was on the watch, perhaps even with half-closed eyes, he passed the mainmast, and as he did so, the tall figure there ensconced, rapidly and noiselessly moved aft, leaving no more of either sound or mark behind his swift and unshod feet than would the destroying angel. Quickly as thought he passed between the tiller ropes, where hung the lately reversed hour-glass, and adroitly turned the handle of the cabin door, that, already oiled to the nicest point, both at the lock and hinges, should have opened as silently as can the grave. But Captain Livingstone, with the suspicion natural to tyrants, had locked it from within. This fact once ascertained, not a moment was lost by the stranger, but slipping through the aftermost maindeck port, and climbing by the fore-topsail yard to the mizen-chains, as the reader on another occasion has already seen done before, the determined adventurer quickly opened the quarter-galley window, and long before the half-awakened sentry had returned, the the intruder was hidden within the apartment of sleeping-cabin.

Half an hour passed. To one of the two living beings within that apartment how rapidly they stole away! passed as they were in the deep but last slumber ever likely to be enjoyed in this world. To the other, what a deep, dreadful gulf of time did those thirty minutes unfold! With a stern and powerful mind unnaturally agitated—every nerve fixed in the

most intense and dreadful excitement—resolutely bound up to do a deed abhorent to his nature—a deed of deliberate murder—how terrible was the pause thus given to all the conflicting emotions of his heart, while the object of terrific vengeance was sleeping unconsciously, deeply, securely before him!

It did pass. At length he heard the step of the sentry once more going forward. The footfall gradually died away, and then as deliberately rose the tall, powerful figure that had hitherto crouched in the darkness. A few soft steps, and the destroyer's hand was by the captain's curtain. Without the delay of a moment, that might prove so fatal, it was lifted aside. The stranger looked on his sleeping prey for a moment—drew his breath as if for some great exertion —plunged his large, bony, and muscular hands upon the windpipe of the slumberer—and the latter, with a deadly effort to cry out, awoke. It was in vain. The murderer knew his strength—felt how firmly his huge thumbs were placed upon the way of life; and while the struggling and wretched victim kicked and plunged without causing any noise that could bring assistance to his aid, his slayer dragged him partly from his hammock, so that, by the moonbeam's aid, his starting eyes might see who was his destroyer; and then, as life gradually ebbed away in the suffocating bosom beneath his grasp, he returned the body to its couch, relaxed the gripe of death, whose deed was too quickly done, and sinking down beneath the canvass screen, passed across his cold and dewy forehead, the fingers—of a murderer!

What were the feelings of the living tenant of that cabin? For a time he seemed lost in the tumult of his own heart, which laboured convulsively and in silence, as he alternately buried his face in his hands, and then clasped them as if in prayer to that Heaven, one of whose most rigid laws he had violated. The attempt, however, seemed in vain; though, for a space

bewildered by the dread reproaches that must have been so loud within him, the sound of the sentry's steps seemed to startle him from his fearful meditation. With a celerity little according with his former profound abstraction, the taker of life arose—undid the fastenings of the gunport—dragged the body of the captain as noiselessly as possible from its hammock, and launched it into the bright and sparkling tide below. Little perceptible plashing could, from the nearest part of the vessel, have been heard, as the body descended into those waters that received it. Still—for a moment—something singular seemed to meet and detain the hearing of the guilty. He paused —no—surely all was right. "When the sea gives up its dead," muttered he, "I *may* hear that hated voice again—not before!" The projection of the mizen-chains prevented the possibility of the act having been detected from above, and when the sentinel returned to the cabin door, the gunport had been replaced, and its fastening once more secured. With a coolness of nerve that bespoke a heart mighty even in its crimes, the criminal then leaped into the hammock of the captain, and their remained till he heard the steps of the sentry going forward a third time. As six bells, or three o'clock in the morning, pealed forth over the decks of the sleep-locked frigate, the destroyer, opening the quarter-gallery window, and closing it again with equal silence, returned as before, and glided away unseen to his hammock on the deck below.

CHAPTER XIII.

When deeds like these can be, and be forgiven,
What shall we say of manhood and of man.

Day dawned on board the frigate—bright, clear, and glorious. The lieutenant of the watch, whose commis-

sion had reached him at a period of life when everything that is beautiful most affects the mind, stood looking from the weather gangway at the full round orb of light, the segment of whose circle just uprose above the wave. A myriad of gorgeous tints and splendid forms, crowded together in magnificent confusion, towered above the rising sun into the deep blue ether:—cities, forest, spanless rivers, interminable plains, all that the fancy could coin, or eye of the dreamer enjoy; while, over the fresh and almost fragrant water, a dazzling streak of living fire seemed to skip from crest to crest, sparkling as it came along, a golden messenger of day from another world.

The first lieutenant, having on the night previous left orders to be called at four o'clock, had retired from the quarter-deck, and the ship was once more left to the comparative silence and repose of the watch. Although the air had at that time felt heavy, and the sky bore every appearance of threatening weather, the breeze had rather gone down than increased during the night; and as the ship's progress had been rather under than above the desired rate of eight miles an hour, no necessity had existed for either shortening or making sail, while the gallant frigate still held on the same course.

At last, to the joy of those who had kept the middle watch, and the regret of those who still were to go through that probation for the morning, the hour of four o'clock arrived. The ship's bell sounded forth its sleep-disturbing summons. The quarter-master hurried down to call the relief midshipmen, and the mate of the watch to rouse the next officer, together with the first lieutenant. With the heavy start of one who too well knows that he must awake to some unpleasant duty, the latter received the intimation of the hour, and hastily rising, called for a light to oper the letter of the captain.

If his manner had before been disturbed and ruffled, the contents of the long written order, whose seal he had just broken, did not greatly tend to bring him to any pre-eminent state of composure. With a motion of the shoulder and elbow that betokened the excess of his surprise, he read through the document very carefully a second time, and placing it on the table before him, proceeding with all possible haste to make his toilet. This is never a very long matter with a seaman, and ere many more minutes had passed, he and the officer of the next watch left the gunroom together.

As soon as the preceding officer had been relieved, Sneak went up to his successor and showed him the written order. Still more astonishment was exhibited by its second peruser than its first, while a dash of no slight anger might have been read, mixed up with this feeling. After a long consultation, which seemed to take no very precise termination, Sneak inquired, "Is the land in sight yet?"

"No; Heathfield told me, when he went below just now, that it was not yet in sight, but soon would be, as we should have to leave it on the lee-quarter. He little knew what was in store connected with that island. But stay, give me the glass; If I mistake not, there is something monstrously like the haze of low land now coming in sight on the lee-bow."

The two lieutenants, taking with them a couple of glasses, mounted into the fore-rigging and having ascended to the foreyard, after a few minute's scrutiny, returned to the quarter-deck.

"That's the land, depend on it Sneak," said the officer of the morning watch. "What's to be done? It would be but kindly to give him a hint of what's coming."

"And lose your own commission, for acting in downright disobedience to the positive written orders of the captain? I, for one, will have no hand in it."

"But consider, my dear fellow—is it not a hard case—a cruel, heart-rending, infamously oppressive case?"

"Well, but charity begins at home, and by so violating the captain's orders we might bring ourselves into the very case we deplore, and yet do Ramsay no essential service after all."

"By my soul, 'tis too bad to be driven to such a selfish argument; and yet I know not either what else to do."

"We can do nothing—whatever orders may be in themselves obey them we must. We must remain quite silent till we get so near as to be within two or three miles, and then the first cutter must be piped away."

"Very well—needs must, I suppose, when the devil drives; but it goes against my heart, and right glad am I that you have had the duty, and not I."

At the steady rate at which the frigate was now speeding, a very short time brought her within the spaced named by the lieutenant, in reference to the island then on their lee-bow; for as day had hardly yet broken, it was nearer than it had at first appeared.

"Pipe the first cutter away," was the order from the quarter-deck.

The whistle's piercing tones resounded through the still slumbering ship below, and the boatswain's mate in person collected the crew together. Two of these, however, had been so severely flogged among the main-topmen on the night before, as to be now incapable of doing their duty. As soon as this was reported on the quarter-deck, Sneak ordered the vacancies to be filled by Ramsay, whose watch it now was, and another seaman. The cutter's crew having seen that their boat was fit for lowering from the quarter, the frigate had by that time regained the required distance, and was hove to, the boat was brought up alongside, the crew taking their places and tossing up their double-banded

oars, the gun-room steward descended with a basket and Lieutenant Sneak, following, took his place.

"Shove off, forward," was the word. The cutter's bow was thrust from the frigate, the twelve blades fell simultaneously into the water, and, with Ramsay pulling the starboard stroke oar, glided rapidly over the exulting surface of the ocean towards the land.

The golden burst of the young sun upon the deep blue waves—the feeling of freshness, and that wild freedom which seems to breathe in every aspect of nature, lightened spirits even so depressed as his. Little did the crew dream, as they pulled so cheerily along, the duty on which they were hastening, or that which they had left behind.

After forty minutes' hard rowing, they struck the gentle acclivity of a sandy shore. The island to which this belonged was low from the sea, yet from this spot it could plainly be seen to possess one or two higher hills than the stranger would have expected to find and these were covered by the palm-tree, the wild tamarind, and tropical growths, filled up by cane-break and similar brushwood.

"Come, my boys," said one of the bowmen, jumping out; "here, at any rate, we may have a run before we get packed up on board again." And, delighted with the thought, he leaped out upon the sand.

"Come back here, sir, directly," called out Sneak; "not one of you is to quit the boat without orders. Ramsay, take from the steward that basket, and carry it on shore.

Without a moment's suspicion that anything sinister was meant, the broken lieutenant rose and took the basket from the steward's hand. As he did so, he thought he felt something like a pressure of the hand, and turned round in surprise. All, however, that he could observe was the steadfast gaze of Sneak fixed upon himself; but conscious of no reason why it should be so, he proceeded to step out of the boat, and

carry high up to the dry sand the basket committed to his care.

No sooner did the acting lieutenant observe the poor fellow to be out of ordinary hearing, than he turned round to the crew, and, in as low a voice as he could command, said, "Bow-men, shove her off a few fathoms from the land. Out oars, my men!"

The dominion which habit acquires over reason is so great, that the men, used only to obey their orders, without attempting to canvass their propriety, were too busy in executing the commands of their superior, to think, for the first few moments, of that to which they led. The first pause that afforded time for this reflection showed them that they were lying at a couple of ship's lengths from the shore, on which stood Ramsay, who had not yet put down his basket. As soon as he had done this, he turned round, and, somewhat surprized at beholding the cutter lying with her oars out, her bow towards the sea, and at such a distance that he could only get on board by swimming, in danger of shark's teeth, rushed down to the water to learn what was the matter. The truth now suddenly dawned on all hands, and as soon as the ill-treated officer arrived within hail, Sneak opened the captain's letter, and pointing to it with one hand, said, "I have landed you, Mr. Ramsay, by the written order of Captain Livingstone, who, from the complaints you have made of improper impressment, is anxious to render you the '*justice*' you have required, by setting you free from the service at the first land which has appeared since your requisition. Give way on board, my men."

CHAPTER XIV.

Say, which shall most our swelling bosoms move,
The tyrant's malice, or the comrade's love?

When this brutal and insulting outrage on human nature was ended, as far as the worthless projector and despicable tool of it were concerned, the men looked round on one another in mute astonishment, as if still doubting whether they had heard aright.

"Give way, stroke-oar—sir, do you hear?—give way, you blackguards, when I order you."

"In half a minute, sir," replied the coxswain; and stepping from the stern-sheets into the middle of the boat, "here, my lads, since that gentleman is to be left to shift for himself on a bit of land that most likely has no human being on it save himself, let's do all we can for him. Here, I'll club a jacket and a knife for him!" whipping his jacket on the thwarts, and flinging his knife in it. The example once set, spread with the electricity of deep and genuine feeling throughout the whole faithful thirteen.

"Here," cried another, "here are my shoes and neck-cloth!"

"Here goes for a hat!" said a third.

"D—— my eyes, as luck would have it, if I hav'n't two pair of breeches on this morning, and here's one and a pair of purser's stockings." "That's right, Bo; and here's a neckhankicher and a box of baccy, for that *must* be useful. Has none of ye got ne'er a pipe?"

"Here's my dudeen, and welcome," cried another

And so the enthusiasm ran from man to man, as if there had been but one heart amongst the whole of them —steward and all; for the latter being a young man a civilian who had come out in the frigate from England, and had known the prisoner in all his woes and all his worth, wept like a woman at the almost certain but most cruel and lingering death to which he saw a noble-hearted man devoted, and from which all the

kindness and solicitude of his friends would, he feared, but slightly tend to shield him

While, with a quickness and determination of purpose that petrified the weak mind of Sneak, the men thus showed their most unequivocal attachment to Ramsay, and their instinctive abhorrence of the persecutions so mercilessly heaped upon him, Sneak himself, between surprise, pusillanimity, and resolution, knew not how to act. That Ramsay should thus, as the boat's crew evidently designed, obtain from their momentary fellowship and genuine compassion everything they were able thus hastily to contribute to the alleviation of his fate, was, he knew, in most direct opposition to his orders.

Still what could he do? Even to so common-place an observer as himself is was evident that he might as well attempt to dam up the falls of Niagara with his open fingers, as to stop the burst of feeling which Ramsay's horrible sentence called forth in those rude breasts, to which so many a soft passion might plead for preference in vain.

Meanwhile, the various contributions each had made from his person to the probable wants of the deserted, or, as it is technically termed, the "*marooned*" man, being securely wrapped together in a bundle, this last was put on the point of a boathook, and one of the strongest of the seamen got upon the head-sheets to give it a vigorous cast to the shore.

"As surely as you attempt to fling that bundle to the land, Wilson, I shoot you through the body."

"Can't help that, sir," was the cool reply, as the boatman deliberately fixed the bundle on his boathook.

"Sit down, sir, this instant; and out oars, all of you. Wilson, I'll be as good as my word;" and Sneak drew forth a pistol, and cocked it preparatory to taking aim.

"Come, your honor," said the larboard stroke-oar, rising, while all the rest followed his example, "let your shot pass through the whole of us, for we're all

equally to blame; *you* needn't see the bundle go ashore, sir, or know anything about it. 'Tis but human nature to feel for a brave gentleman, cast on a desert place without two days' food to eat, nor a plank to cover him, let alone a bed to lie on, and not a sight or sound of man or voice to near him more. How can a shipmate bear to think of this, sir, and not tear the heart almost out of his bosom to help him a bit over the rough of it? We would have done the same for you, sir,—Mr. Ramsay there among the very first."

Rude as this appeal might have been, who, at such an hour, could have withstood the truth of it? Who but Sneak? On him it made as little impression as on the wave beneath him; and when the boatman, with a sudden and powerful swing, launched the bundle nearly at the feet of Ramsay, the lieutenant levelled his pistol, and taking the best aim he could, shot the offender through the right arm.

"Thank ye, sir," said he, touching his hat with the left. "There's little merit in doing a shipmate and a good officer a bit of sarvice, if it don't cost you anything!" holding up the bleeding limb to his shipmates' gaze.

"Here, my boy!" said the stroke-oar, "there's still a handkerchief in the boat; sit down, and let's clap a stopper on that wounded spar of yours."

"Give way, my men, instantly—give way!" cried Sneak. "The first who refuses is a dead man."

A second pistol here made its appearance, and the seamen, with murmured rage and evident reluctance, were compelled to leave to the most barbarous of all destinies, one who in every trying circumstance had not only won their deep esteem, but proved how fully he deserved it.

As for poor Ramsay himself, the sudden nature of his misfortune seemed to have come upon him with startling effect; but neither in gesture, word, nor deed, did he betray the least incapacity to bear up even

against that which might have crushed the heart of the bravest. Silent he remained, for he knew the uselessness of appeal; and the motionless attitude he preserved, was as much the result of a sudden shock that he had sustained as aught beside. It was not till he saw the motion of the rowers quickened to their utmost velocity, and the boat still receding towards the noble frigate hove-to in the distance, that a convulsive throe of anguish produced an involuntary clasping of his hands together on his chest, and the quickly following remembrance of the boat's crew's kindness towards him called forth the only farewell he could now give them—a wave of his hand.

The men, whose eyes were intently and affectionately fixed on his fast-diminishing figure, saw this token of his thankfulness towards them; and before the lieutenant could foresee, much less prevent, such an exhibition of their esteem—the rowers, one and all, tossed their oars perpendicularly upright in the middle of their boat;—a salute of respect reserved in the service to pay honour to the rank of a captain. For an instant the fresh waters gleamed brightly as gold in the morning sun, rendering each blade distinctly visible for miles. A sudden dash, and all were returned once more to the bounding wave that bore them onward, for life and death were in their race.

Notwithstanding the care which the strokes-man had paid to his shipmate Wilson, in attempting, by a rude external ligature, to stanch his bleeding arm, the good intention was only in the most trivial way successful. The bullet had, in its passage, partially divided the brachial artery, and though all hands knew that a tourniquet stopped the effusion of blood, none of them were aware of the principle of partial pressure on which that instrument acts; and, still more important, none of them would even then have possessed the ability of turning such knowledge to account, since their ignorance of anatomy did not permit them to determine what

particular vessel was wounded, or where that vessel lay.

Stretched out on the stern-sheets, therefore, the kind-hearted sailor lay, with the blood slowly trickling from his arm, despite of every effort of his shipmates. The pallid hues of the grave were rapidly stealing over his bronzed and still cheerful countenance, and over him bent, with all the revolting wildness of strong fear, the conscious-stricken Sneak, who had to answer for the blood of a fellow-creature so unnecessarily shed.

"Pull, my men!—for me!—for God's sake pull! Stretch out heartily! give way, my lads! we may yet get on board time enough for the surgeon to save him! How are you, Wilson, my good fellow—less faint?"

Such were the passionate, fearful, and repentant exclamations and questions of the lieutenant, as he witnessed the result of his guilty hastiness. Every time, however, that Wilson attempted to make a reply to his entreaty, his words endeavoured to impart a comfort little deserved by him for whom it was intended; while, at the same time, his voice grew less able to convey, and in truth most fatally contradicted it. Still the attached shipmate hung over him, keeping the wounded arm in an upright position, and multiplying wrapper after wrapper on the limb in vain. Neither were the rest of the crew deficient on their part. Though heartily despising an officer who had proved himself as ready to exult over the misfortunes of another as to sink beneath his own, they could have been urged in their exertions by no stimulus so powerful, as the increasing pallor of him, who, an hour since, leaped into their boat with as much irrepressible gaiety, as strong health, a kind heart, and a mind void of offence, could give to a British seaman.

Again and again they cheered each other on, as they swiftly shot along from crest to crest, and the frigate appeared more and more near.

"Here we get aboard of her, my boys! Another

stroke! Now stretch to it! Another, my hearties! One like that again! There she goes! Hold your heart up, Wilson, my boy—a few minutes more!'

Such were the cheering cries of the crew, as their stout ash oars bent like so many withes in their powerful grasp. Away flew the boat right on, as if the senseless timbers themselves knew that the life of a "true-hearted sailor" were worth some struggles to preserve—the water crisping and curling up under her fore foot, like the feathering of an arrow in its rapid flight. Even Sneak began to hope that his fears magnified the danger. But one glance at the wounded man as soon sank his spirits to despair.

"Heavens, he looks very pale! Wilson, my boy, cheer up! Steward, have you not a drop of rum—not one drop?"

"No, sir; Mr. Ramsay had everything in the basket."

"Is there no spirit in the boat—nothing of any sort to revive him? One moment, only one moment more, and he might be saved! Give way, my men, give way. Ha! the frigate sees something is the matter. See—she fills her maintop sail, and bears up for us! Wilson, my fine fellow—Wilson, I say, cheer up! here's the frigate at last."

"The frigate!" echoed the wounded man in little better than a whisper, endeavouring at the same time to lift his head and see her.

"Here, Bo, I'll shove ye up to have a squint at her," said the spokesman, propping up his shipmate's heavy shoulders.

The glazing eyes of the rude tar unclosed once more upon the noble ship, as, running free of the wind, she came dashing down towards them in all the glory of her element. A happy smile broke over the cold features of the sailor, as he recognised a sight familiar from his childhood. His lips parted to give utterance to a faint "hurrah!" and the last sad voyage of life was over.

Happily for him, the final port was gained. On those who survived, how dark a tempest was, even at that moment, about to break!

CHAPTER XV.

So deep in slumber, or so strong in guilt,
He answers not to thy ungrateful voice.

NEVER was truer passage written than that in Hamlet —"There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." In almost every department of life, view it in what phase we may, some singular anomaly may be found, of which we can make nothing more than the existence. So with man's friends —of all the ills that are borne by humanity, it would prove a curious calculation to sum up the evils that have been imposed by injudicious friendship. In the case of the seaman whose death we witnessed at the end of the preceding chapter, the last proximate cause was the elevation of his body by his shipmate, which causing the blood to forsake the brain and gravitate around the weakened heart, produced a faintness that organ was unable again to dispel.

Even, however, had the poor fellow been allowed to remain in a recumbent position till assistance could have been rendered, hæmorrhage had gone much too far to allow of the preservation of life; and thus was added one more to the great number of those who have perished from want of assistance under wounds trivial in themselves.

It was not until the cutter had arrived alongside, and the assistant surgeon hastened down into the boat with ammonia and other stimulants, that the fact of Wilson's being actually dead was known. Then, when the corpse was removed on board, and the boat rehoisted in its place, the men were at liberty to tell their tale of horror to all who chose to listen.

Few have ever found a more attentive auditory, to one more deeply excited and agitated by what they heard, than did the first cutter's crew among their shipmates. In a quarter of an hour every soul in the ship had heard the relation; that man excepted, who, save Ramsay himself, was now most interested in the whole—namely, the captain. Again and again the officer of the watch urged Sneak to go below and report to him what had occurred, in hopes that the tidings of Wilson's death would cause him to relent towards Ramsay, and, content with the torturing suspense he must have already known, now at the eleventh hour reprieve him from his sentence of solitary starvation.

In reply to these arguments and entreaties, Sneak referred to the written orders of the captain, which positively forbade his being called until eight o'clock, and enjoined the immediate making of sail so soon as the boat returned. In lieu, therefore, of the lieutenant going down to call the captain in hopes of saving Ramsay, he advised his brother officer not to risk disobeying those orders which took from the poor fellow even the last appearance of hope.

After much deliberation, and many an anxious look at the desert shore,—where the broken lieutenant was still to be seen, by aid of a glass, sitting down in his cheerless misery, watching the departure of his late shipmates, and the last finish of his own desertion,—the watch were piped to shake out a couple of reefs in the topsails; the topgallant sails, jib, and driver were set; and at the rate of ten miles an hour the frigate bore away.

As if in abhorrence of the foul deed thus consummated, the morning, which had hitherto been bright as the glory of our youthful dreams, now grew dim and clouded as that false meteor becomes to our maturer age. A heavy bank of dark purple clouds soon rose from the sea to windward, while the breeze,

freshening in its strength, bellied out the vast surface of strained canvass, and sang shrilly through the shrouds and cordage of the frigate the mournful and prophetic requiem of him who had already perished, and those who were so soon to die. Again and again the stiff ship careened to the recurring blast, and dashed away the water from her bows, as indignant of aught that opposed her flight from the scene of such tyranny as had that morning been carried into execution.

Long since, the glass had failed to discover the solitary figure of poor Ramsay, sitting upon the ground beside the scanty store with which his unrelenting foes had pittanced out his life. It was a relief to the eyes of the humane when they could no more behold one whom none could cease to compassionate or attempt to save.

Too soon that low sandy island melted into the blue haze of the horizon on the lee-quarter; a faint misty line hung for a few moments in the air, and then, when even refraction had no power to give this to their sight, the act was complete—Ramsay was now finally abandoned, to live or perish, as the case might be.

At this juncture, when the attention of all hands was so painfully stretched on the rack, the cry of "Sail on the weather bow" gave, much to the relief of Sneak, a change to the subject in contemplation. The breeze had before become so stiff that the officer of the watch was on the point of shortening sail. Now, however, this was hardly deemed to be the thing just as a stranger was heaving in sight, and while yet it was undecided whether friend or enemy.

At the rapid rate the frigate was now speeding, it was not long before her signal-men discovered the blue ensign of Old England flying from the peak of the approaching brig: within half an hour from that time the two vessels had been hove to, and a boat from the smaller one sent on board with letters and a passenger.

The boat then returned; the vessels filled their sails once more, and stood away from each other as rapidly on their opposite courses.

Who was that luckless passenger whose treacherous fortune had placed on board the frigate at such a juncture?—certainly not one who had deserved such ill-treatment at her hands—for it was no less person than her surgeon, whom Captain Livingstone had so capriciously left behind him after the court-martial.

When this officer was informed of the act that morning committed, the conflict between grief, rage, and despair, left him almost speechless. Ramsay had ever been to him a most dear friend. When he had in some degree acquired the composure necessary to acting as vigorously as the case permitted, he resolved at all hazards to go and report himself to the captain.

"Well, sir," said Sneak, who had never before seen the doctor so furious, "you can of course do it if you please; only be good enough to remember that I made acquainted beforehand with the captain's written orders that he was not to be called till eight o'clock, and it wants now something over half an hour."

"If it wanted five hours, sir, it would be the same to me. I have a duty to perform to God and my own conscience, which is, thank Heaven, superior to any ridiculous forms of our own invention. This I will perform at once, let what will be the result. If my commission goes for it, so much the better! I am sick and disgusted with the brutality of a service, where such an outrage could be perpetrated by any ingenuity of man;—though it hardly exceeded that of impressing as a seaman one who had moved as an officer, and was protected by his appointment as merchant captain. A duplicate of that appointment I have with me, and so I shall inform Captain Livingstone when I go to report myself—which I will this instant do."

Without waiting a moment for a reply, the surgeon, excited as he was, hurried down the companion

ladder, and walking up to the cabin door, put by the sentinel, and knocked loudly on the panel.

"Sir," said the sentry in alarm, "my orders are that no one should disturb the captain till eight o'clock, and 'tisn't seven bells yet."

"Sir," said the surgeon, fiercely, and in a tone of voice purposely intended to reach Captain Livingstone's ears, "my orders to you are to hold your tongue. I am the surgeon of the ship—my duty requires me to awake the captain, whether it anticipates his orders or not; so the responsibility be on my shoulders."

"Very well, sir; then I'd better call the sergeant."

"Ay, call any one you like—the cook's mate, if you please;" and again applying his knuckles still more vigorously to the door, the space within reverberated to the sound in a manner that might have awakened the most determined reposer. Still no reply came. and the surgeon concluded that the captain had heard the colloquy with the sentry, and did not choose to answer the summons on his vigilance. Without more ado, the doctor next applied himself to the handle of the door.

"You can't get in so, sir—the captain always sleeps with his door locked," said the sergeant, coming up.

With a muttered oath of impatience the doctor now applied his finger-joints a third time to the production of a sleep-dispelling peal; but still no reply was vouchsafed from within; while the horrified sergeant and sentry stood by, looking on, and thinking to themselves, "What manner of a man is this, to beard the lion in his den?" The surgeon, they knew of old, was choleric and daring, and far from slow of availing himself of that position which renders the surgeon of a ship, if a man of any ability, by far the most independent officer on board.

Enraged to a degree that no one had ever witnessed before, by the obdurate manner in which the

captain prevented all access to him, the doctor now returned on deck, and endeavoured to persuade the officer of the watch to act without his superior, and put the ship about for the desert island, or at least to heave her to, till the bashaw below chose to be seen.

Accustomed, however, to a stricter discipline than that under which the surgeon discharged his part of the ship's duty, not even the officer of the watch, friendly as he was to Ramsay's cause, would listen to such a proposal; on the other hand, they assured the doctor that patience was his only remedy, and that all he could do was to wait the remaining twenty minutes, till the captain chose to be visible.

Hateful as this was to a spirit chafed and fiery as his own, there seemed nothing else left for him but to wait; and this he did, though the brief interval bore with it the long heaviness of an age. But the grains of our glass fall with an equal measure and rapidity, whether our joys appear to urge them on, or our griefs to retard their progress; and scarcely had the sound of eight o'clock ceased to ring within the bell on which it was struck, than the doctor, faithful to his friend, turned down to the cabin door, and, confident of admission, knocked this time with more submissive accent.

But though the worthy leech had seen fit to change his manner, so to all appearance had also the captain, and not even the particle of a snore could the impatient listener catch in reply to his summons, which was therefore repeated amid the hurricane and whirlwind of whistles, produced by the boatswain and his mates piping to breakfast.

"What an obstinate, obdurate rascal this fellow must be!" quoth the doctor, as he knocked and thundered again for admission, with equal want of success. After trying this amusing exercise for some time, he once more repaired to the quarter-deck.

Here, however, he experienced little comfort, since

those who knew Captain Livingstone better than himself, declared that such was the arbitrary doggedness of his character, that now he had once resolved on remaining silent, it was not at all improbable that he might continue so to do, while the least over anxiety continued to be shown as to his pursuing a different course. For another half hour, then, this kept the doctor quiet,—if such a term could be given to the bearing of a man who continued rapidly pacing the quarter-deck, like a chafed lion in a barred den.

When at length one bell after eight o'clock struck, no entreaties or persuasions could induce him any longer to remain expectant, but down he went once more to the half-deck, and with his clenched fists continued to sound a *réveille* that none but the most unconscious living person could have refused to answer. As to sleeping through it, that was impossible. Men have before now slumbered on quietly enough, though guns have been fired under their hammocks, and all the rattle of anchoring and weighing with a chain cable has been going on upon the same deck. But these were customary sounds, and the ear refused to be startled by them. Never, however, since Noah rated the brute-creation as waisters, did mortal captain hear such a hubbub as was raised at Livingstone's door; and yet, such was the perverseness of his nature, (so at least the doctor said,) not a word would he reply. Even offended pride, at finding the dignity of his station so outraged, seemed now to have none of that exciting effect which, on occasions heretofore, had been so abundant.

Once more he had recourse to the lieutenants, and again they declined to interfere. Again he waited, and again he strove to gain admittance into the captain's cabin; but this the latter, by his silence, seemed evidently to decline. While stamping and fuming at the door, scarcely knowing what to do, while the breeze still increased, and every moment bore the ship further

from the island, a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and running up to the new officer of the watch, he suggested that some accident might have happened to the captain—some fit, or that he might have destroyed himself in remorse. At the mention of remorse, the first-lieutenant, who stood by, treated the thing as ridiculous; but the surgeon maintained his view of the matter, and after some very high words, which nearly ended by his being put under arrest, they separated.

CHAPTER XVI.

They see, yet doubt—they know, yet disbelieve—
Hope—dread—imagine—everything but grieve.

As the hour of nine o'clock approached, it became necessary to muster the crew, according to the daily custom, by divisions; but still the captain neither arose to his duty, nor demanded that meal which by this time was generally dispatched. Even the phlegmatic first lieutenant began to doubt that all might not be right.

As for fits, they are a plaguy impudent race and would, now and then, as soon attack a captain as any one else. This brought him to the conclusion that captains might have fits; but as to remorse—no, he had never met a captain in the navy troubled with that; so consequently judged it to be wholly out of their nature.

The captain therefore was, by his officers, concluded to be in a fit, out of which it was proper they should make some attempt to recover him.

The first lieutenant, having ordered the sentry to turn the glass at nine o'clock, but not to strike the hour, rapped at the mysteriously closed door in person, endeavouring, in most respectful accents, to hint to his superior *who* was without; but still in vain. At last, with a belief that Captain Livingstone really was ill,

and with a somewhat distant hope before him of getting a death vacancy, the lieutenant sent for the armourer to force the cabin door lock, and summoned his brother officers to witness his entry.

It needed no reiterated commands to collect around him all the members of his own mess, who, conscious of the serious aspect affairs began to wear, and excited to the utmost by the mystery, waited with mingled impatience and awe the opening of the portal that was at once to reveal to their expectant sight that which their heated fancies "believed not, yet foretold."

After considerable trouble and delay, the lock, being on the inside, was sawn out by the carpenter, and all pressed forward in a body to enter the dread domain, with as much *empressement* as if it had been the very region of romance. Still, however, did impediments present themselves. Not only had the door been locked, but doubly bolted. The bolts, therefore, must be sawn out at the top and bottom, as well as the lock, and once more the carpenters renewed their labours.

Still, amid all the noise and confusion of the saw, the chisel, and the mallet, no other sounds disturbed the echoing silence within, or came to interrupt that breathless and intense attention bestowed by the waiting group of officers without. No authoritative voice was heard in stern demand of who dared thus intrude; no suppressed laugh indicating that extreme love of mischief which alone could have prompted a captain, under all the circumstances, to remain so silent.

The final stroke of the saw was at length given, the last bolt broken from its hold; and while the eagerly curious carpenter and armourer remained anxiously peeping over the threshold, the ward-room officers, followed by the captain's valet, stepped into the interior, so rarely disturbed by such a staff.

"Captain Livingstone," said Sneak, halting in the middle of the cabin. No reply. Before them hung the screen which surrounded the captain's cot, and every-

thing appeared as orderly as if the imperative officer was sleeping behind it. With one impulse Sneak and the doctor stepped forward and lifted up its folds. The whole group followed close at their back, and when the canvass was withdrawn, their anxious gaze rested on the empty bed. It was neither tumbled nor discomposed in any way, but one corner of the clothes was turned aside, as is customary with many people on first rising.

"What can have happened?" exclaimed Sneak, in a tone of the greatest horror, moving towards the surgeon, who most indignantly replied,

"Had you listened to my advice, you would have ascertained this fact before. As to what has happened, Heaven knows."

Turning away from the surgeon with ill-concealed annoyance, Sneak now looked into the larboard quarter-gallery, which, with some slight space added to it, was used as a dressing-room.

There stood the small neat toilette-table, with everything carefully ranged on it by the captain's valet on the night preceding. Not a brush, comb, nor razor, was out of its place. There too hung the mirror used for shaving, but it reflected anything but the face of its master.

At every step Sneak's perplexity increased, deepening, as it did so, into absolute horror and dismay. All the cabin windows were fastened, with their dead lights drawn up outside. The ports, the skylights, were the same. The little window of the starboard quarter-gallery was alone unfastened, but even that was closed, and scarcely big enough for a man to pass through.

Captain Livingstone could never surely have left his cabin by such an exit, save for the joke of the thing; and a practical joke was his abhorrence. But he was clearly not in his cabin, and again they looked around; yet how could he have quitted it?

The sentries of the past night were examined; one deposed to having seen the captain enter and lock the

door, and the next stoutly maintained that he had not since quitted it.

The assembled officers, when they heard this, rubbed their eyes, as if still doubting that they slept. An officer, a post captain, to be missed from his cabin with as little ceremony as a midshipman from his hammock!—they had never dreamt the possibility of such a thing, much less heard of it. They looked at one another, but no substantial form melted away: there each stood, "making the dread reality too real." During this pause each face wore a more startled and grave aspect. They seemed like a set of men conscious that some unearthly intruder was amongst them, whom yet they were not permitted to descry. With sidelong and suspicious glance their eyes now and then wandered round the still darkened cabin, into whose chambers the sun was not yet allowed to send its rays. As they found it, so it was for the present to remain. The first lieutenant held in his hand a fighting lantern, the chequered light of which, now falling in a strong glare, now in deep shadow, glancing round, made the wondering spectators almost fancy that they beheld the dim shade of their captain drawing round them in unearthly joy at their natural surprise.

"Well, gentlemen," said the superior, breaking the silence, and resting his lantern on the captain's table, while the rest stood round it, "we can make nothing more of it. All that remains for us to do is to get a few more lanterns, and go round the cabin once again. Captain Livingstone was neither of an age nor disposition to indulge in practical jokes,—which, you must all distinctly remember, he strictly forbade. I cannot think it possible, therefore, that this absence of his can be attributed to any such cause. Neither can I think it much more possible that any harm can have happened to him. He does not walk in his sleep, that I ever heard of, and cannot have fallen overboard, for all the ports and windows are closed. As to any violence in his own cabin, how can that be thought of, with an armed

sentry at his door, and the whole watch on deck within hail?

He must, I think, be on board the ship; but if so, how came the door to be locked? It is a most distressing mystery. However, before we allow any of the crew to know the cause of our surprise, we will make doubly sure that he is not here. There are the other lanterns, which the sentry has now brought in; light them, and search."

In obedience to this order, four more lights were brought to bear on this dark business, and the search commenced. Not a locker nor corner but was now peered into—scarcely room was left unexplored for the hiding of a cockroach, much less a captain. The result, however, proved as unsatisfactory as might have been expected: nothing was discovered that could in any degree hint as to the fate of him for whom they sought.

It was now determined that the sergeant, the master-at-arms, a ship's corporal, and six of the first petty officers, should go below, and as quietly as possible search the lower deck and cable-tier, while the first and second lieutenants, and the four oldest midshipmen, should, with the same view, go through the main and upper decks, boats, rigging, and tops. By this means the scrutiny was extended throughout the whole frigate; the cabin being left precisely as it was found, the door locked, and the key given to the first lieutenant.

Time, meanwhile, pursued his unceasing march. The duty of the ship proceeded in its accustomed course, but no captain was to be found; nor could anything be discovered that threw the slightest light on Captain Livingstone's absence.

As this truth came home to the minds of the officers assembled on the quarter-deck, their eyes sought each other's faces, with a fearful intelligence of expression that needed not the aid of words to convey their suspicions as to what had occurred.

"There is some most fearful villany going on in this

ship," said Sneak at length; "but how it has found means to work itself out, I know not." To this remark no one seemed willing to add more.

The necessity of delaying the muster at divisions was now at an end, since there was no longer on board, a captain whose pleasure in the business it was necessary to consult. The postponed two bells were therefore struck, and the call to divisions piped. The junior officers reported their men all present, and the surgeon, presenting his sick-list in silence, retired in full dudgeon below.

Sneak now walked round the deck, and then ordered all hands to be sent aft to the capstan. The summons was instantly obeyed. Foremost amongst them was to be seen Ramsay's friend, the corporal.

The paleness of recent illness seemed struggling on his countenance, with the quickly-varying flash of rage, grief, and some even still more deep and deadly passion. Having, as the reader knows, been in the sick-list on the preceding night, it was not until the boat's crew returned from the shore on the following morning, that he heard of the death of Wilson, and the more cruel treatment of Ramsay. In the meantime, he had not been idle; all that man could do to save his benefactor's life, and thus render back to him the obligation he had received from him, he was prepared to do, at whatever risk, pain, or penalty; for where gratitude and affection once root themselves in a heart of passionate nature, whatever may be its other faults and crimes, not the rack itself can tear them out.

Nor was the corporal's the only stern countenance among the crew that bespoke the deadly pitch to which the soul within was wrought. Many were there who, bound by the common chain of deep injuries and long-continued insult and oppression, waited the forthcoming events of the day with mingled dread, exultation, and impatence.

Something of this struck on Sneak's eye as from the

capstan he looked down on the dark auditory he was going to address; and, instead of boldly eyeing them like a determined and relentless inquisitor, resolved to find out who amongst his hearers was the man of midnight murder, his looks fell abashed on the drumhead before him, and his words bore with them an impediment of utterance that gave his address rather the character of a schoolboy's ill-spoken defence, than that of a resolute impeachment.

"My men," said he, "I have called you here to say a few words on a most mysterious and unaccountable occurrence, which I can only hope involves none of you who now hear me in the deadly crime of assisting to bring about. If so, depend upon it, as soon as the ship gets into port, no effort will be left untried to discover the truth, or to wreak the heaviest vengeance on the criminals; and, rely upon it, they cannot escape detection. I allude to the sudden and most extraordinary disappearance of your captain from his cabin."

"*Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!*—three cheers more, my boys! Now again—*hurrah!*"

As this sudden and unexpected interruption burst on Sneak's ear, he looked up, and beheld the ship's crew, one and all, cheering at that very intelligence which he had so laboured to depict as the most horrible thing that could have befallen.

"What is this?" cried he, in the first burst of his astonishment. "Can it be?—surely not!—and yet—it is—mutiny!"

At that word three more cheers burst from the crew; and one of the chief leaders, a flogged foretop-man, stepped forward from among the circling rebels, and said, "Now, sir, your turn of duty's over, we intend for the future to take charge of the ship ourselves."

"Marines, do your duty; where are your arms?"

"The marines," said the corporal, stepping forth at this moment, "think with their brothers, the seamen."

"Is there no one, then, to strike a blow for the ship?

Where are all the warrant and petty officers? Your arms, gentlemen!—get arms!"—and down ran the midshipmen to provide themselves with cutlasses.

"Pinion that noisy lubber before he does any mischief!" rudely interrupted the foretopman—Cresswell was his name—and, suiting the action to the word, he sprang on the lieutenant at one bound, and, grasping him in his brawny arms with a true Cornish hug, up went the officer's feet, and down he came upon the deck with a blow that effectually stunned his oratory for a time; and long before he recovered his senses, his hands and feet were securely lashed.

"Now, my boys," cried Cresswell, "a good example's worth any money. Don't be sparing of your reef-points, and get the gentlemen snug under hatches; bind 'em all—gently with your blows abaft there,—don't hurt a hair of their heads more than may be helped. Now the devil's hen's gone, we may spare the chicks."

The measures thus speedily taken for securing possession of the ship, without harming the officers, were so sudden, and had taken them so completely off their guard, that, beyond a stray pike or two hastily snatched from the racks, and as rapidly wrested out of their hands the officers were without the means of any adequate assistance. Those who, obedient to Sneak's ill-considered orders, had hurried below for weapons were seized on the various decks by the seamen: thus dispersed, and all at a disadvantage, they were overpowered without the possibility of striking a blow.

The warrant officers, expecting nothing of the sort, nor indeed any call upon their attention on the quarter-deck, were each busily following their respective duties in different parts of the ship; and by the time they arrived at the scene of action the game was lost. Neither could the few petty officers who were stanch, feel greatly interested in acting against shipmates stirred up to this sad point by the repetition of injuries too fresh in their abhorrence to allow of their wielding willing swords.

In a few minutes all the officers had been conveyed bound, to their cabins below, and a sentry placed in the gunroom to see that no one of them got free. The civilians, on giving their parole to remain passive were exempted from bonds, as were also the younger midshipmen.

The master alone was retained on deck to direct the ship's course, on her return for the desert island, to take off Ramsay. On this point the crew were determined and unanimous, having resolved upon putting themselves under his command as soon as he should be found.

This, however, they were foolish enough to let out; and the master, without staying to consider whether Ramsay was a likely man to accept such a leadership, at once took it into his head that the mutiny had been got up with Ramsay's previous consent, and refused to steer the ship, or give any information by which to find the island on which he had been abandoned.

Having expressed these views to the mutineers in as many words, the old master most indignantly stalked away to the companion ladder. Already his foot was on the coombing, and he was in the act to descend, when Cresswell, enraged at his conduct, ran forward from the wheel and giving him a hearty kick on what is generally supposed to be a most tetchy portion of the body, at one stroke sent him flying down the ladder.

No sooner did the insulted Soundings feel what had happened to him, than he jumped on his feet, mounted to the quarter-deck, and, in the face of the aggressor, exclaimed,

"D——n ye! if you're a man, I'll fight ye for a baubee!"

"D——n your baubee!" cried the other; "I'll fight you without, you lubberly slice of scupper leather."

Without more ado, to it they fell at hearty fisty-cuffs, while the rest (for Jack Tar, even in his fiercest moods, loves nothing better than such a piece of fun) gathered round the combatants to see fair play. Of this, how-

ever, there was little or none, for the master's hot temper had inconsiderately matched him against one who in youth, stature, and activity, was far beyond himself. In three minutes it was quite evident that the master would be beaten to a mummy; and as soon as the foretop-man saw how complete was his mastery, he unclenched his hands, and seizing the master by the arms, just as a good-natured stripling would a child, he held him off at arm's length, saying, "Old gemman, if you know when you've had enough, you'll speak out now."

"D——n ye," replied Soundings, spluttering, and kicking with his rage at the other's shins, "ye lubberly, rascally, mutinous, lying swab."

"'Vast there, old boy, 'vast," said Cresswell, hopping round in a ring. "D'ye take me for a nigger, that you slap out at a fellow's precious shanks in that way? Remember two can play at that. Come now, old fellow, come to your senses, will you?"

"Gif ye will but let me go, I'll beat your brains out, if ye have any," answered the furious master, struggling like a babe in the arms of a giant, and at last, when he found he could do nothing else, applying his teeth to the other's hand.

"Tut, man of mine! ye'll no bring disgrace on the auld country, that ye fight like my grandmother's sow!" exclaimed the corporal; making forward, and interposing his iron frame between the topman and his late superior. "Let him go, Cresswell, let him go," said he; "I'll be his surety for more sensible conduct."

On the instant Cresswell released his hold, the master flew at him like a bull-terrier; but the corporal, putting an arm round the latter's waist, coolly lifted him up, and carried him down under the half-deck, leaving him there without a remark, and seemingly with as much indifference as if he had been a log of wood. Not that the master permitted him to encourage any such a belief by his passiveness; for, both with tongue and arms, his peppery but not bad-hearted little country-

man belaboured the marine to the utmost extent of his strength during the whole passage.

Under the half-deck the master was given in charge to the sentry, who was to see that he remained there till he recovered his temper. By this time the results of the ill-judged fight began to show themselves in the many-tinted marks left upon his features, and the rainbow-like radiation encircling his left eye. He also gathered sufficient recollection of mind to become aware of the folly of kicking against the pricks, till uch time as he could also set fire to them.

He sat down, therefore, with all the composure in his power to assume, (for little indeed of it was real,) and while consoling himself with passing his bandana over his inflamed and painful features, communed with himself as to how the ship could be regained, and the views of the mutineers defeated. In his own mind, he had not a doubt that Ramsay had instigated and fanned this outbreak long before its actual occurrence; though fortunately had, unknown to the majority of the crew, been turned adrift before he could assist in its progress, and, by taking command of the rebels, profit by its completion.

This the master in his own mind fully resolved that he never should do; though before, as an ill-treated officer, he fully extended to him all the pity in his nature. No one could more loudly have condemned the atrocious act of forsaking him; but these gentler emotions seemed now to have become so many frozen snakes warmed in his bosom, whenever he contemplated this mutiny set afloat by his machinations. Without giving his reason an opportunity of ascertaining beyond idle doubt whether this was so or not, he resolved on depriving the mutineers of all chance of recovering the island, or regaining the marooned favorite.

The open log-board stood opposite to the gun on which he had taken his seat. On this he intently fixed his gaze for half an hour, yet not in such a way as to

attract the sentry's notice, but rather as one in deep thought and dejection fills the vacant glance with something, he cares not what, while the mind within is busy on matters far distant. Such, however, was not the case with the master—he soon learnt off by heart the courses, winds, number of knots and that the ship had been steering and making, and this done, he took occasion of the sentinal's back being turned to rub out the whole with his fingers. He then shut the log-board, and marched below.

CHAPTER XVII.

In rudest breasts affection lingers long,
And reason sinks beneath a sense of wrong.

As soon as the angry and discomfited master reached the ward-room, he found the officers, as I have before described, arrested, and in their various cabins. With many growls he submitted to stern necessity, and in like manner retired to his own, doing so, however, with the better grace, that he might commit to paper the particulars lately rubbed from the log.

Scarcely had he done this, when the door was suddenly dragged open, and three or four of the ringleaders appeared, demanding what he had done with the ship's reckoning.

"The ship's reckoning!" said the wrathful Scotchman, in admirably feigned surprise. "The de'il be with ye, what should I know of the ship's reckoning? is it not marked on the log-board, you fules?"

"I say, old boy, suppose you keep your slack terms to yourself a little more," replied one of the mutineers. "Remember you're not under the pennant now, and it may be as easy to make you walk the plank as the deck. We know very well that it should have been on the log, but some nimble-fingered thief has been and rubbed it all out, and the sentry says it's you."

"Is there no other lies can be tauld in the ship to suit you as well as that?" confidently replied the master; and then, as if at once to answer and to exemplify his own question, he added, "I tell ye I havena set eyes on the board to-day—I don't so much as know whether it's aboard the ship or out of it." Pulling towards him the door of his cabin, he shut and fastened it, leaving the disappointed seamen to indulge in those expressions of anger which formed their only resource.

"Well," said the corporal as they reached the quarter-deck, "has that obstinate old dunder-head given you up the reckoning?"

"No, the old methody, not he—there's no circumventing them ere sort of chaps—you never catches one swearing, but they lie like old Nick! He declares he hasn't set eyes on the board to-day."

"If he hasn't his eyes, then, he has his fingers," replied the corporal, who was not to be taken in so easily; "but if he's once said it, he'll stick to it. But I know a trick that'll settle him. I'm sure he's the man that's rubbed out the board; but that's neither there nor here: make a fresh score and begin to keep it again, and if the sentry allows it to be rubbed out a second time, we'll rub him down with three dozen. Now, if we could look into the master's cabin at this moment, no doubt he's working the day's work, or pricking the ship, on the chart. Let him, therefore, see the courses we run, as marked on the board afresh, and if we happen to be getting into danger, he's not a likely man to let the ship go ashore, blowing hard as it is. That will make him speak, if nothing else can; so let's see if the quarter-master can't remember enough of the morning's log to make up for what that old Turk's diminished. Who was the quarter-master of the morning watch?"

"Old Mustapha," replied one of the council then assembled round the drumhead of the capstan,—mentioning one of the oldest and best seamen in the ship, who was thus nicknamed from the fact of his having so

capacious a memory as to be able to tell the thousand and one tales of Scheherazade in the Arabian Nights.

"Mustapha, Mustapha!" bawled half a dozen voices—"pass the word for Mustapha, the quarter-master of the morning watch." In a few minutes the venerable oriental made his appearance. By aid of his good recollection the seamen ascertained the courses run since leaving the uninhabited island, and having proceeded to wear ship, stood as near for the desert island as the wind would allow them.

In this matter, however, they had to overcome a considerable difficulty. From the time when Ramsay's figure was first lost in the distance, up to the time of their turning back, they had been running free, with a heavy and increasing breeze in their favour. Against this they had now to beat up—the breeze fast quickening into a gale, and with every disadvantage imposed on them by having at best only guessed at the course just run; not being by any means certain of the land which they were seeking, nor yet too sufficiently masters of the art of navigation.

Perseverance they had, and courage they possessed in abundance—two qualities so necessary in the overcoming of difficulties; but still there were fearful odds against them. The first step taken by the mutineers was to appoint their various officers. Herbert was appointed acting captain till such time as Ramsay could be recovered; Cresswell and three others, from the fore and maintops and forecastle, were to be the lieutenants; and the corporal was to be a sort of fighting captain, to command the marines, and be at the elbow of Herbert on any emergency. In case of any such arising, the captain was also to call a council of the whole five to regulate their procedings by vote—the majority to carry the day. Numerous other alterations and improvements—as the mutineers considered them to be—were also followed up, and, among the rest, the dividing among themselves the effects of Livingstone, which were

of course still on board, and were thus allotted for division, with that good and inimitable kindness, the preventing the ghost of the departed from being jealous of any mutineer in particular.

By this time noon had arrived, and still the wind blew more directly than ever in the very course which they wished to pursue. The dark blue waves, capped with the snow-like foam that broke and ran in long flittering lines upon the glowing ridges, seemed with every passing gust to grow more formidable and threatening—the sky gradually deepened from a mottled blue and lead to one sombre canopy of the latter colour, streaked here and there with a few livid clouds of a deeper indigo, flying over the louring face of the dim expanse with the swiftness and untiring speed of Time itself.

Still the seamen would not shorten sail. They pictured to themselves, and but too truly, the heart-broken wretchedness and woes of the unhappy solitary, as night descended on the sea, gloomy, threatening, and tempestuous; his scanty means of subsistence nearly exhausted—his frame and mind alike worn out by the hopelessness of watching for some sail—either that of his own captain relenting, or of some stranger with a heart less savage. Then, as both failed, no shelter was there to receive him for the night; the beast of the forest howled for him, if he lay despairing on the shore; the serpent might with equal facility prey upon him, if, like the birds of the air, he took refuge in the trees; while the shark, the monster of the deep, played round his prison, and viewed him as a criminal destined to be the victim of some of the lower creation, to whatever element they might belong.

Nothing more was needed to stimulate them on to the rescue of a brave and esteemed shipmate, who, if he had the good fortune to pass unscathed through all these horrors, was still reserved for the sure and more protracted pang of starvation.

But however anxious they might be, however strongly

they strove, obstacles were increasing in their path, and not of a nature that readily, if ever, gives way.

The wind was evidently increasing to a regular gale. Sail had been carried till the distended canvass seemed bellying out from its very boltropes. The frigate, stiff as she was at all times under sail, and calculated to bear its pressure to an extent beyond most vessels, was now, and had been for the last two hours, heeling over to a degree that kept her foremost lee-gun constantly under water; for at that distant period the comparative imperfection of naval moving forces, as a science, had not, as now, ascertained the point beyond which a press of sail impedes the sailor.

Reef after reef had been taken in; the topsails, the topgallant-sails taken in next; the jib and spanker exchanged for the storm-jib and trysail, and the topgallant masts sent on deck. Still this proved as much as the frigate could stagger under; and though she drove ploughing through the waves, it was evident that she made nearly as much lee-way as advance to windward; for the point they were anxious to attain was now conjectured by the seamen to be right in the wind's eye.

The men had not long been at their dinner, when, with a sudden heel, the ship appeared to be thrown completely on her beam ends. Men, chests, bags, plates, dinner utensils, of every sort and description, were hurled in one indiscriminate mass over to leeward. A universal exclamation of surprise, if not of horror, arose throughout the lower deck, for many thought that she was about to be capsized; almost at the same instant it was drowned in the sudden burst of some tremendous sound, more like a peal of thunder than aught else. The three topsails had parted from their boltropes, and, like so many children's paper kites, went flying away before the awful hurricane which now swept over her.

"All hands on deck!" was then piped, but faintly distinguished through the roars of the whirlwind; but

even that summons was unnecessary. By the time that the voice had uttered the words, not a soul but the sick and bedridden had remained below. When they gained the deck, the ship had partly recovered herself from her beam ends, but the water was rushing like a torrent through the bow and gangway ports, and so out at those near the stern; and now, though nothing but the storm-jib and driver stood the blast, these were expected to part every moment and the ship thus continued to heel to the blast sweeping over her.

As for the spray blown from the overtopping sea, it was one vast sheet of foam, and drenched to the skin every man exposed to its action. Had no other accompaniment of the storm been frightful, the roaring of the wind alone would have rendered it so. Not a sound besides could be distinguished, and though you beheld those around you opening their lips, you heard nothing more than a dull confused whispering consequent upon the action.

Danger, that so frequently dissolves justly constituted authority, here played a part the very reverse. For a space it seemed as if no mutiny had broken out aboard; for mutineers and officers, alike and at the same time, commanded,—forgetful of what had occurred to separate their interest in other matters, though nothing could divide it in this. Some idea may be formed of the fury of the squall, from the fact of its taking eight men to guide the wheel with any sort of command, and, even then, it was a task as great as they could possibly effect.

After eight or ten minutes spent in the awful suspense of whether their ship was still destined to float, or be swallowed up in the terrific yeast of waters around, the wind began to abate somewhat of its violence. The men beheld with unfeigned joy that all their spars had stood unhurt; so that, beyond a little wreck of gear, the bending of new sails was the heaviest task imposed on them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The waters wild
Went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.—CAMPBELL.

ALTHOUGH the first sudden burst and fury of the tornado had passed, neither the danger nor the power of the gale were much diminished; but while it continued thus violent, it was idle to think of bending new topsails, which never would have borne the strain of sheeting home.

It was enough that a rag still stood, sufficient to keep the ship from broaching-to. The attempt to set topsails would have produced no benefit to the primary object the mutineers then had in view, and only endangered the lives of the men. Keeping the yards as they had been left when the sails were blown out of them, nothing was for the time attempted, but the getting the storm-staysail ready for setting, as soon as the gale should allow the frigate to recover somewhat more of an even keel than she at present possessed.

This, after an hour, was done, and the ship slowly made her way through the water, but far more rapidly to leeward than towards the point they wished to attain. All that could be done had been effected. The watch was called, the ship once more resigned into the hands of the mutineers; the officers retired to their cabins; the mids, delighted with a holiday, were not too greatly troubled in mind to inquire how they had obtained it; while the rugged seamen, gathering aft upon the quarter-deck, beheld the day go down, and themselves utterly powerless to extend a helping hand to one who so much required it.

The whole of that night and the next day the ship continued baffled with the same strong gale. The topsails, it is true, had all been replaced, but no sooner did they attempt to sheet one home, than crack went the

distended canvass, and every care and speed was necessary to save the sail from being so shivered as to be irreparable.

At last, as the hour of four o'clock approached on the second day, Herbert and his brothers of the council, thinking that the wind had moderated sufficiently, agreed to make another effort at resuming that course which had been so vexatiously interrupted.

"Boatswain's mate, call all hands—make sail!" cried Herbert. In a few seconds the order resounded through the ship, and the men were thronging at their posts, with as ready an obedience as when Captain Livingstone was overlooking them with the most jealous vigilance.

"Fore and maintop men, stand by to cast loose the fore and maintop sails—away aloft!"

At that word, the rigging to windward was crowded by the dark swarm of seamen, whose greatest activity and strength only enabled them to ascend with comparative slowness in defiance of the gale.

As soon as they had gained the still dangerous footing of the maintop, hanging over the wild and tormented boil of waters that swept past the frigate's gangway from her bow, the order was given,—

"—Trice up, lay out, cast off your points, my men, quickly, and stand by to lay in when we sheet home. Forecastle-men, afterguard and mizen-top men, man the fore and main topsail sheets; stand by to ease off the lee clue-lines. Let fall aloft there to leeward—haul aft the lee fore and main topsail sheets. That's right, my men, down with it! so—the sheet's home—belay. Now then to windward, ease off the weather fore and main topsail clue-lines. Let fall—haul out; so—belay! Lay in, men—lay into your tops quickly. How does the foretopsail stand it forward, Cresswell?"

"All right yet a while," returned the seaman from the forecastle, regarding the close-reefed sail, as, acted upon by the tremendous pressure of the wind, it remained stretched like a board to the utmost point of tension.

Quickly indeed was the influence of the additional canvass felt on the frigate, which, heeling over to the gust, surged right through the heavy seas she had before mounted over, trembling, as she did so, from stem to stern with a deep vibratory motion, that almost threatened to part one timber from another. Still the seamen, with hearts as stern as the oak beneath them, and impenetrable to all fear, regarded only the sails above.

Made of the strongest canvass, and fresh from the store-room, or rather sail-bin, if anything could defy the tempest, they might be expected to do so. With every fibre drawn to the greatest endurance, they long held the contest doubtful. Meanwhile the increased speed of the frigate was undeniable, notwithstanding the dark green masses of water which every few seconds poured over the weather bow, sweeping everything before them on the forecastle, and falling like a cataract on the battened maindeck through the waist gratings.

Once more the hopes of the seamen began to rise; and though fearful what might have been the result of the night which Ramsay must have already passed on his miserable island, and the ensuing one which must also inevitably elapse before they could rescue him, they yet hoped to brave all dangers, and get him back once more amongst them, to assume the command.

"Let those sails stand but ten minutes longer, and I think we may trust them," said Cresswell to old Mustapha, who had charge of the helm. The words had barely passed his lips when one of the maintop-men was heard again hailing, "Quarter-deck there, main topsail's going!"

Crack! crack! were the sounds that quickly followed, as the sail, now flapping in fragments with a noise like thunder, at each motion tore itself into a greater number of ribbons, and fluttered away to leeward, like so many wild streamers floating in the gale.

"Man the fore and main topsail cluelines," cried Herbert, quickly jumping from his gun; "stand by, to

cast off the weather topsail-sheets—ease off, clue up. Now to leeward—ease off the foretopsail sheet, forward—walk away with cluelines, my boys; up with them—so—belay—lay out on the fore and main topsail yards! Forward there, Cresswell, take the topsail off her. Maintop ahoy—stand by to cast that topsail off, and send it down upon deck. Sailmakers and afterguard, down on the lower deck, and bring up another spare main topsail, and take care that—"

"Man overboard!—man overboard!" was the startling cry that resounded simultaneously from fifty voices, interrupting the execution as well as the hearing of Herbert's orders, and drawing, with a sudden rush to the weather gangway, every hand on deck, not imperatively occupied with some share of duty then going on.

The unhappy man for whom this solicitude was expressed, had fallen from the weather foreyard arm, and striking on the shrouds from the great inclination the ship had to leeward, aided probably by a sudden roll, might, if not momentarily stunned, thus have saved himself. From whatever cause, this he was unable to effect, and bounding off with the sudden spring of a dancer on the tight rope, he fell into the water, just a little forward of the weather forechains.

"Lower down the quarter-boat—lower down the quarter-boat! Second cutter's crew, who are they?" thoughtlessly vociferated some of the younger hands of the mizen topmen, and a few more of the afterguard, who, with every wish to be smart and active in saving the life of a shipmate, were wholly ignorant of the only method of now doing so.

Some of these good-hearted but rash and inconsiderate fools had already rushed into the cutter, and were busy casting off the gripes.

"Come out of that, you lubberly cows!" cried Herbert, springing over on the hammock cloths; "Smith. Ellison, Brockley, the first man of you who casts off a rope-yarn of that boat without orders, shall have three

dozen before he's twenty minutes older:—what boat could live in such a sea, much less get alongside again? Are you mad?—come out of that directly, and if you want to be of any use, try which of you can fling your shipmate a noosed rope, as he rises off the gangway."

Having erred only from want of knowledge, the seamen were no sooner set right, than they jumped forward to execute Herbert's plan; but more experienced hands from among the forecastlemen were already before them, and with a coil of ropes in the hands of each man, these now stood at the entry port and the main and mizen shrouds, waiting for the rise of the fallen man, to endeavour to fling the noosed rope, if possible, over his head, but at any rate within his reach.

The ship was now again making but little way, and in a few minutes, as Herbert had predicted, the foretop man rose almost exactly abreast of the gangway; but, alas! a huge mountain of water intervened between him and his parted ship and faintly struggling on the further declivity of it, he appeared a mere speck on the dark blue surge.

"Now, my boys, now's your time!" cried Herbert, who, to every other deep anxiety, added that of being nearly related to the unhappy man, who was little more than a stripling, and whose mother had been his only sister. "Steady now—a strong arm and a coor eye—one of ye at a time—gangway first—now heave!—That's it; well thrown, my lad, but too low: you in the main shrouds, mount up a ratlin or two, it will give you a higher cast—there, that'll do—steady now—hold him on, a hand or two, that he dosn't jerk himself overboard."

With a strong steady cast, the second man whirled the coil around his head, and with his utmost strength hove it over the waters below. The drowning youth had been looking up at it with that intense appalling gaze which impending death alone seems capable of imparting to the human countenance, and no sooner did he see its end fall in the sea than he sprang towards it.

But little till that moment had been estimated the enormous bulk of those vast masses of broken water that heaved around them. Long as the rope was, it fell far short of the gallant but unhappy lad, who still put forth all his strength to reach it.

"He'll get it: he'll get it!" exclaimed his friends on board, as his arms seemed almost to grasp the life-preserving noose. But it was a seeming only—distance had deceived them, and in reality still many feet were intervening. Another moment, and the slowly gathering way of the ship gradually tautened the before slack and circling bight of the line, which, as it glanced away suddenly from his pursuit, seeming almost like some perfidious and juggling fiend, in his primeval serpent guise, delighting to mock the life it would not save. The look of agony cast by the foretop-man on his sympathising shipmates, as this second hope of deliverance passed away, was indeed piteous—making a final spring through the waters at the illusive rope so near him, he sank some feet beneath the surface, buried for a time and only the more exhausted by his vain attempt. "A longer rope in the mizen rigging—a longer rope!" cried Herbert, who had been watching him with the most intense anxiety. But when the foretop-man again rose, he was already abreast of the mizen chains, and as the large hull of the frigate necessarily drifted to leeward much faster than so small a body, he was getting away on the weather quarter, despite of all his efforts to the contrary. The back-wash also of the waves, from the bends and bulwarks of the frigate, aided this dreaded result, and prevented him from getting, as he endeavoured to do, alongside. When, therefore, the rope from the mizen chains was thrown to him, it was at once seen to be quite beyond his reach, nor did a second from the same quarter mend his position.

"Poor fellow, he's gone!" huskily muttered Herbert, the water stealing down those cheeks that not even the cat had been able to moisten. "His mother never

loved him better than I—and, well I might; not a fine seaman ever trod 'twixt stem and stern. Throw him a hencoop, my boys—throw him a hencoop." As he watched the still struggling youth floating away on the angry billows, he added, "'Tis a bitter mockery, but nothing else can be done—it's all over."

Meanwhile, however, a cooler head had been preparing even for this last failure, and the corporal, who had unreeved the main and signal haulyards, and knotted them to a grating, now flung the latter overboard, and made a sign (for nothing could be heard) that he still retained the means of hauling it on board again.

The fast sinking youth, who seemed to inherit the determined and enduring heart of his uncle, once more directed his energies towards attaining this new ark of deliverance: wearied, however, by his struggles, the horrible suspense of mind which had necessarily accompanied it, and the fact of having to strive against all these foes with the additional encumbrance of his dress, he naturally made but little progress.

Still he no longer had the back-wash from the ship's side to encounter; and though the weight of the waist-grating prevented its being flung far towards him, it was now a much easier matter, while that floated astern, for him to swim down to leeward towards it. This then he did, and, considering all he had gone through, most gallantly.

Affected and worked up to the last degree of excitement by witnessing the noble struggle he made against adverse fate, the crew, who crowded on the taffrail, spontaneously burst into a loud cheer, which they twice repeated. But loud as was this mark of their admiration and sympathy, and still more loudly as roared the tempest, a shrill overwrought voice was heard above all, exclaiming, "Is it my boy?—is it my boy?"

At this sound Herbert and many others turned round, recognising the foretop man's father.

The old man came rushing up the hatchway without his hat, his face blanched like the cheek of the dead, and his eyes ready to start from their sockets. He was himself a captain of the forecastle, and one of the few men who had refused to join in the mutiny, or obey any orders given him by any of the mutineers. The fact of his son's having acted a contrary part, had raised between them the first material difference that had ever occurred in their lives, and at this unhappy juncture there appeared no probability of its ever being again reconciled.

How he had learnt the fact of his son having fallen overboard, no one could tell, unless it was from that singular knowledge which stands so curiously between guesswork, instinct, and divination. No one had the heart, however, to answer the question put with such fearful clearness; and when the old man rushed aft, his sight strengthened by the horror of the moment, he beheld his son buffeting with the waves, and held only to life by so slight a fibre, that scarcely could the "slender tie" of Young be deemed more frail "that breaks at every breeze."

As the parent's eye became riveted on this absorbing spectacle, he could not find utterance for a sound;—another stroke, and his son would gain the grating. Worn—tired as he was, it appeared as if even this was too much for him, and at the last moment of the twelfth hour the life within his grasp was to be resigned! No! Again he rallied all his remaining powers—forth dashed his arms—the gigantic mass of water rose under him, and plainly on its summit was to be seen the foretop man, resting his wearied body on the grating he had striven so hard to gain.

Once more rose the cheer, and triumph mingled in its breath as well as hope—the father raving and shouting louder than any. In the very moment of their joy, the very act of gratulation, all their ecstasies were dashed; the signal haulyards had got knotted, and

though thrice the length the grating now was from the ship, the sudden swell that bore its burden onward rudely snapped the only means by which any exertion of the son could be made available.

Quickly, indeed, was the cheer turned to a groan, as the crew witnessed this lamentable accident. The father remained silent, clasping his hands in the convulsive energy of despair.

"Now he is lost!" at length said some of the men, as they looked sadly and gloomily on the drifting wood, the only stay betwixt its possessor and the fearful death that literally surrounded him. This exclamation seemed to recall the father to his recollection.

"No, no! not lost!" cried he, with frantic gestures; "the boat! the cutter! Who will volunteer as crew with me?"

"I!—I!—I!" cried fifty thoughtless yet generous fellows, touched only by the parent's maddened grief, and forgetful that a life is but a life, and that six or seven were not idly to be flung away in the vain attempt to save one.

Again a rush was made to the quarter-davits, and the boat-falls were again got ready for lowering.

"'Vast!" cried Herbert, springing from the trance of grief which had hitherto absorbed him; "not a plank of that boat shall be lowered to save the best on board!"

"But I say she shall be lowered!" cried the old man, springing furiously towards the davits.

"No, brother, no," kindly but firmly replied Herbert, interposing; "look on that sea—what boat could ever live? Every soul would be lost, and your son too and then what better would you be?"

"No, no, they wouldn't—let me try—let me try!—quick, before it's too late,—you hear there's three times the crew to volunteer."

"Not a man of them shall start. I tell you, brother, the grief's as much mine as yours; but it must be borne."

"Borne, you murderer! and so must you be borne. Is it not enough that you've seduced the boy from his duty, but that you must go to drown him in that way before his father's eyes?"

"Not I—not I! Lord knows I would do anything to save him if I could. What's God's doing is not to be strove against."

"God's doing!" ejaculated the forecastle man, in the bitterness of his soul; "there was nothing of that ever came near you, you murderous heart of flint! but what else could I expect from a mutineer! God help me!" —and wringing his hands bitterly, and uttering, in the frenzy of the moment, a thousand wild exclamations, he sprung aft upon the traffrail, to take one more look at his only—and now, sad thought—his drowning son. Still the determined topman, with the last and fast-fleeting energies of youth, grasped his only hope, the grating, and turned to the slowly-retreating ship those piteous looks for aid that almost maddened the powerless by-standers to behold. At last a great wave came rolling on towards him, breaking, with resistless force, into a vast whirl of waters, as its arched and culminating head approached the grating;—a mingled cry and shriek seemed to come from the lowest deep of the father's heart, when he witnessed it rushing forward as if to engulf his son. The white and foamy arch was seen plainly and terribly to extend its grim and horrible jaws over him—here struck with the deepest blue, and there showing, with a bright and dazzling whiteness, the figure of the drowning seaman, and the frail grating to which he clung. For an instant the father thus distinctly beheld his boy, wildly throwing up his arms for succour, a mere diminished speck beneath the foamy surge that was about to swallow him up; and then the surge broke furiously over him, and nothing was to be seen but a sheet of foam. Herbert, in the meanwhile, stung by the undeserved reproaches of the father, moved to the utmost by the love he himself bore to the son, had

seized the deep-sea lead-line from its place in the mizen chains, giving the reel to a good strong hand to hold, and hastily and entirely divesting himself of his clothes, lashed the line round his waist.

In vain the corporal reminded him of the hardihood and extreme rashness of the undertaking—of the weakness yet left by his late and cruel punishment, the wounds of which were still raw and bleeding on his back; in vain he painted the extreme probability that the foretopman was already dead—perhaps might have even sunk ere he could reach the grating. All was unheeded;—not a second pause did he make in his arrangements, and his only reply was, "If I don't come back with him, I don't come back at all. Let the line be paid out gradually, and when I pull, haul slowly on board; but be sure you don't check it as the wash of the wave comes against me—nothing can stand that."

A marine here came up, with one of those small wooden canteens which are used in a march; it was filled with spirit, and, taking a hearty draught, Herbert flung the belt securely under one arm and over the other shoulder, and, ere the raving father knew the object on which he was bent, Herbert had sprung, at one fearless bound, from the weather-quarter down into the raging sea below.

The tremendous shout echoed by the crew, as they witnessed this generous act of self-devotion, might well have cheered the heart of the undaunted Herbert. He was, however, lost some feet beneath the surface before it burst forth. Rising slowly through the dense and coloured medium to the gradually-brightening light of day, he no sooner felt himself able once more to inhale the air, than he paused for a moment to recover his exhausted breath, and dash the water from his eyes; then, with the cool determination and rapid vigour of one who feels that life is doubly dependent on his exertions, he struck steadily out, but with the swiftness rather of an inhabitant of the deep, than an intruder on its

treacherous and deadly realms, an intervener between its grasp and its prey.

Nothing could exceed the intense excitement that prevailed upon the taffrail during this dangerous experiment. "Hurrah! hurrah!" cried the men, cheering him on. "Bear down to leeward—bear further away!" shouting and waving their hands in that direction to one already past hearing, and equally, of course, unable to see that which was passing in a quarter to which his back was turned.

Still it was not needed that he should be thus steered, for, bearing in mind, with admirable coolness and precision, that the object of his search must now be a little to leeward of the ship's wake, he swam boldly forward, dashing from crest to crest, as much in a straight line as possible, and slightly to windward. After exerting for some minutes his very utmost speed, the seamen beheld him suddenly alter his course, and, dashing at right angles down to leeward, as a vulture stoops upon his prey, they considered, and rightly, that he had discovered his nephew. Every eye was now fixed on him; even the father clasped his hands, and seemed to be petitioning for his success.

As well as the fading daylight and the distance enabled them to ascertain, he seemed to be giving the exhausted man some of the spirit he had so wisely carried round his neck. Suddenly the before slack line was tautened.

"Give it me!" said the corporal, "I'll haul him on board. Look out, some of ye—say when the seas approach, that I may ease off, or they may both be lost after all."

"God in mercy forbid!" responded the father, in whose bosom hope began once more to revive.

Slowly and with great care the corporal now gathered in the deep-sea line, which, though made of the strongest and finest hemp, and most carefully laid up, was still sorely taxed when made to drag two such strong and heavy men through so impetuous a sea.

"Slack! slack! slack!" continually cried the seamen around the corporal, as they witnessed the approach of those overwhelming bodies of water, to resist which would at once have put a period to their expectations.

Obedient to the word, away swept the slack line overboard, as the two struggling men were borne away on the rolling flood to leeward, and in one moment was lost all the ground they had so anxiously been striving to obtain through the many anxious minutes that had preceded. The fury of the wave swept by, and again the cautious corporal began to gather in the line; but ere many fathoms had been hauled inboard, a repetition of the same disheartening and vexatious cry once more obliged him to give way; and it soon became apparent that the seamen whom they were striving to save, were rather losing than gaining ground; and as the nearly exhausted wheel foretold that the lead-line would soon be expended,

"Cresswell, Cresswell!" cried the corporal, who perceived that the strength of the stoutest seaman must at length be exhausted by these efforts.

"What's the matter, corporal?"

"Wear ship, my boy, if it's possible, if you have any sort of wish to see old Herbert on board again, for we'll never be able to drag him and his nephew through these heavy seas. The only chance is to see if we can't bring the ship near them."

"Well, I'll try with all my heart, only I fear they're not far enough off. I don't think she'll wear round in so short a space."

"Well, you must try; for if not, it's a chance but it's all over with both those poor fellows; and you must do it quickly too."

"Here we go then. All hands wear ship; boatswain's mate—Mustapha, up with the helm; hands to the peak, and gaff haulyards—man the driver—vang and throat downhaul—lower away—haul down the driver."

As these commands were issued, the only after-sail

now carried by the frigate quickly sank upon the deck, being temporarily handed till again required, while the head of the frigate falling from the gale, rapidly shot over the waste of foam like a loosened steed, as the slackened jib and mainstaysail sheets allowed the whole strength of the blast to gather in their folds, and, lifting the frigate over the seas, bore her onward like an arrow.

As the ship, in performing this evolution, came full before the gale, wave after wave seemed chasing at her stern, roaring with the fury of baffled bloodhounds, and sparkling in their froth and grandeur, till they swelled up far above the height of the taffrail, threatening to roll on her decks, and sweep all before them, or as it is more technically termed, "poop the ship."

Not long, however, was she allowed to remain in this perilous position; for, just as the wind was getting round upon the larboard, or what had been the weather-quarter, Cresswell gave the order.

"Man the peak and gaff haulyards—hands by the vang and throat downhaul—hoist away the driver—man the jib and mainstaysail downhauls—stand by to ease off the jib and staysail haulyards—haul down the jib and staysail."

The rapid tramp of feet was heard along the deck, and down came the only two sails that had hitherto kept the ship from running up in the wind's eye; and the aftermost sail, now acting with redoubled strength, and a contrary effect, the speed of the frigate rapidly lessened, and her bow was brought to the wind on the appointed tack.

Still, as Cresswell had foretold, the frigate, though she had proved much more manageable than could have been reasonably expected, yet would not wear in so short a space as to come within saving distance of her two men, who were now seen vainly struggling upon the weather-bow. But although this manœuvre had not entirely accomplished the object it was sought to obtain, it had considerably lessened the difficulties in the way.

To attempt to get the castaways on board forward would have been to insure their destruction, by being dashed against the bows of the frigate. Instead of having to draw them up to windward against the whole force of the wind, they had now only gently to accelerate their motion to leeward. A couple of men were slung in readiness to be lowered over the stern as soon as Herbert and his nephew came upon the weather-quarter; and after some difficulty, and no slight fear lest the lead-line might give way under the heavy strain necessarily brought upon it, the two men were at last safely hauled on board. The ecstasy, the mingled joy and fear of the father, resembled the gestures of a madman, as he flung himself on the cold and dripping form of his inanimate son—now pouring exclamations of gratitude to his brother-in-law for having saved his child,—now equally moved by his fears that the rescue had been too late for life. With as gentle a degree of force as possible he was put aside, that the bodies might be removed below to the care of the surgeon, who had long been prepared to render every assistance that their collapsed state required.

CHAPTER XIX.

Though deep in guilt the lawless rebels stood,
They shrank from shedding a compatriot's blood.

Much as Herbert had undergone in perfecting his heroic determination to save his nephew, it was long before the surgeon could give any hopes of the latter's life. When at last he did so, his father was as extravagant in his joy as he had been before impetuous in his despair. While, however, they were all crowding around the temporary cots that had been slung for the invalids in the cabin, the cry of "Sail on the weather quarter!" drew off the attention of every one to the deck—a fact

not a little desired by the surgeon, as one contributing in no slight degree, to the more speedy revival of his patients.

Ill and weak as Herbert necessarily was, it required the utmost stretch of the doctor's authority to keep him quietly in a place where he might obtain some sleep. The corporal meanwhile, and Cresswell, together with Mustapha, repaired on deck, endeavouring to descry who the stranger might be that had begun to show herself, like a dim light speck on the distant horizon.

It was soon evident that this vessel was coming down before the wind with what, in such a gale, was certainly a press of canvass. The evening was rapidly closing in, and the frigate's jib and mainstaysail had been reset. She was going along as slowly and as near the wind as before the fall of the foretop-man into the sea.

Very few minutes had elapsed since the first discovery of the stranger, and already the heads of her lower masts were rapidly heaving above the broken and troubled outline of the horizon.

"Well, old Sultan of Bagdad, what is she?" demanded Cresswell, familiarly tapping Mustapha on the back, as the latter observed the new-comer through one of the captain's best glasses.

The old quartermaster looked up for a moment at the other two with the deepest gravity, then casting his glance at the crew clustering together under the quarter of the launch, shook his head mysteriously, and, without the utterance of a word, resumed the interrupted gaze.

"At any rate," said the corporal, speaking, considerably below his breath, so that no accent of his words should reach the ears of any other than of those two for whom they were intended, "let us make out what we can of her."

"This I make out without a doubt; yon stranger's a man of-war! and what's more, one from our own country, or I'm much mistaken."

At this decided opinion, so broadly expressed, both his hearers looked up. In the features of neither could be traced any mixture of that surprise which is generally the result of information we have not been altogether prepared to hear. The quartermaster's countenance seemed to say "We've hit the truth at last;" that of Cresswell wore the air of mischief, distinguishing that of some urchin who sees his seniors in a scrape.

"What's to be done?" exclaimed all three in a breath, which was, however, at the same time but a whisper.

Whatever might be the reply the thoughts of each suggested, none seemed willing to be the first to breathe it. Without uttering a word, or giving sign of thought, save such as might be found in a compressed lip or bended brow, they all once more applied themselves to their glasses. After a more lengthened and minute investigation, however, they apparently saw no reason to alter their opinions, and in silence walked aft together to the taffrail, to confer on the steps that should be taken.

"Well, what's the go now?" cried Cresswell and Mustapha, as soon as they had gained the signal-locker, and had looked round to see that no one was within hearing.

"What!" repeated the corporal calmly, and with that decision and quickness of mind, as well as authoritative manner, that in the hour of difficulty and danger marks out the man of superior intellect; "our steps have but to go right forward; the first one has given us a direction, and the rest must follow; mutiny knows no repentance. At present I see no difficulty; —to be sure yon ship's an English man of-war, and she'll soon be within shot of us; there's no blinking that matter. Let us stand on then, as if we too were the same as we were this day week. If they make no signal to us, neither will we to them."

"Ay, ay, my boy, that's all very fine, but English men-of-war don't pass each other in that fashion," said old Mustapha. "Suppose they——"

"It's no use supposing this, that, or the other, my good fellow," interrupted the corporal; "the matter's just come to this—if we can shy them, we will, and if we can't, we must fight them. But all will depend on what they do. A man's wits, if he has any worth mentioning, are never so sharp as when the pinch comes. But we may plan a thousand things, and all be defeated by her acting differently. I vote we stand on without taking any notice of her; that's the course least likely to excite suspicion; and, if the worst comes to the worst, we can but engage her. 'Twill only be tying our own crew more closely together; and the men who fight with halters round their neck,—for it's no use blinking the truth,—such fellows, I say, generally fight in earnest."

"Well, perhaps so," said Mustapha; "but, for my part, I set so much store upon my pluck, that I'd a mighty deal sooner save it up for some rich East Indyman, or good fat trader. We've changed our trade now, you'll please to remember, Mr. Corporal, as the Gentleman in the Raby Nights says to his princess. Last week we were the boys who fought for honour and glory, with a bit of prize-money now and then, as a red herring to our potaty; now, you see, as we have cut all that ere sort of humbug adrift, it's every man for himself, do you understand, and the devil take the hindmost; and I've seen you tried in too many a squall not to know that we're as safe in your guidance as in that of ere a man aboard. Still, d'ye see, I think it's quite as well to insinivate that there's nothing to be had by fighting that ship to windward but hard knocks, one of which goes a long way sometimes. By the gods of Hellespont, Mr. Corporal, a man gets one of those, and, before he knows where he is, he's as dead as Julyus Cæsar, I'm blowed if he isn't; there's no mistake about that, you know, and that isn't now our business at all."

"Very true, Mustapha, very true," said Cresswell; "and I'm sure the corporal thinks with us; but if we must fight them——"

"Oh! I'm quite agreeable—werry; for as I sees pretty clearly that there are mighty few lads in this ship as will die in their beds, seeing that's not the place for either hanging, shooting, or drowning—the general run of a mutineer's bounty—why 'tis but a matter of time whether we share the prize to night or the day after; still I must think with Shezzerade, (Scheherazade,) when the king was going to cut her head off, 'tis as well to put the thing off as long as we can; because, you know, we havn't had our cruise yet; and the corporal there, who has a mighty nice fancy in that line, has planned out a werry agreeable one—four wives for every man of us, and a deal more, as soon as we get Mr. Ramsay back—and we must not forget him."

"I fear," said the corporal, and his brow darkened as he spoke, "that after the delay that has taken place, and is still more likely to occur, our hopes of saving that brave gentleman are sadly weakened. But, notwithstanding, we must do all we can. I agree with both of you that fighting is no longer our trade, except for those articles of luxury and enjoyment which are to contribute to our happiness. Still, we have set everything upon the cast of a perilous throw, and let us, if we lose, pay the stake, like fearless seamen, boldly. What is it to any of us to die? Have we not died daily for the last two years, beneath the command of such fellows as those whom a *peculiar Providence* has taken from amongst us? What is death after that? We are no children, to fright ourselves with a bugbear. One stroke of the cat gives more pain than many deaths, whether they come from the rope or the shot. No, if we can get off without any encounter, so much the better; if not, we must stand the worst. Is it resolved?"

"Ay, ay!" were the replies which sealed the lives of hundreds in a breath.

"Very well, then," returned the iron-hearted corporal; "that's disposed of; and now to some other business. We can't keep those officers below in arrest.

if we have to go into action. I vote we send down, and offer to leave them at liberty, provided they pass their word neither to interfere with the command of the ship, nor try, directly or indirectly, to regain possession of her, nor cross our plans."

"Ay, Bo, I think that would be an excellent plan, Cress. Well, my lad, you go down, and bring them to their senses; and mind you tell 'em it's no use to kick against the pricks; if that doesn't convince them, why they're unreasonable—that's all I say."

"Why so say I; so shall I start, corporal?"

"Ay, do; and as soon as they agree to it, let Mr. Robinson call them all together, and tell them the terms. But mind, whoever breaks word with us, high or low, may make his will first, for he'll have no time to do it afterward."

With this fearful hint of what was likely to follow, down went Cresswell; but in a few minutes he returned with the blank look of disappointment.

"Why, those fools below say they will enter on no terms with men who have deserted their duty, and when we return the ship into the officers' hands, they will be able to treat with us as we deserve."

The corporal's brow, on hearing this message, grew black as the storm to leeward; then clearing off, he laughed, and said, "We're much obliged to them for all their consideration; but, after all, they are right, and I think the better of them for it. 'Tis a pity that one bad captain should possess such a strength of overgrown power as to be able to spoil a whole ship's officers; but they mustn't think we're such fools as to be taken in with terms like these. My advice is, that we send them a second message, and say that we care not—whether they enter into the compact or not, that we intend to withdraw our sentries, leave them at liberty, and any one of them whom we may detect interfering with or opposing us in the least degree in the command of the ship, we shall try on the capstan, and

hang on the yardarm. What say you, do you both agree to that?"

"Sartainly we do!" responded the others.

"Then, Cresswell, go you down, take off the sentries from over every one of them; and as you do so, caution them before the men of what they have to count on."

"Ay, ay," replied Cresswell; "I'll read 'em a lecture as long as my arm;" and down hurried the thoughtless mutineer to fulfil his mission.

CHAPTER XX.

Who in the race of crime shall dare contend,
Yet fix its limits, and prescribe its goal?

When men arrive at that desperate resolution which we have just seen animating the leaders of this mutiny, no force can hope to quell them. It matters little whether such a result may be owing to a combination of circumstances, or whether nature has so gifted the individuals with that iron strength of nerve which looks thus coolly on the last woes of life—the effect is the same. In a good cause it produces those glorious acts of heroism which remain to animate the great in mind through all ages; and in a bad one it excites the mixed emotions of pity, anger, admiration, and regret, which carry captive the interest even against our will.

Cresswell, having repaired below, and, in accordance with his orders, taken off the sentries from over the officers' berths and cabins, and cautioned them of the dread penalty under which they were placed, the latter received the notice in silence, and the delegate returned to the quarter-deck. In conformity with the resolutions at which they had arrived, the ship remained steadily on the same course as when the stranger was first descried.

Although night was rapidly closing in, the wind had so far decreased as to allow of their setting the close-

reefed topsails, had they desired to do so. But this the corporal, although most anxious to work the ship to windward, dissuaded his colleagues from attempting, as, with great justice, he remarked that such a step would only tend to draw on them the suspicion that they were anxious to get away. In lieu of doing this, however, he recommended that the ship should be got ready for action,—the gunner's department carefully attended to, cartridges filled, wads and shot collected on the main-deck, and every precaution used for an obstinate engagement, while at the same time the ports should be carefully closed, and not a light be shown in the ship to point out her position. These suggestions were adopted, the ship's fire extinguished, the magazine opened, and every preparation made for a determined struggle.

When at last the leaders were satisfied that everything under their command was in as complete a state of readiness as could be effected, the watch was called, and the officers being all ordered to remain below, the frigate was assigned to the care of the colleagues and the watch.

The stranger meanwhile had not been idle; urged by every stitch of canvass she could expose to the gale, and heedless of the danger of being pooped, she came flying down to leeward at the rate of fifteen miles an hour.

Soon after her hull became visible from the deck of the frigate, she was observed to hoist lights. The private signal-books of the captain were in the mutineer's possession, and by these they discovered that their belief as to her nation was correct. The private signals they therefore answered as before determined.

"I think it's time now," said the corporal, "to go down and see how Herbert's getting on, and if the doctor will let us wake him."

"Yes, Bo, I think 'twould be as well to see how he's getting on—you step and see, will you? We'll keep an eye on the frigate."

Accordingly the corporal walked below to the cabin.

"Halloo, shipmate," said the soldier as he entered, "I expected to find you in dock; 'stead of that, I see you are out."

"Ay, ay, corporal, 'tis high time, I think, to be getting my lower rigging over the mastheads, when I hear the enemy's almost aboard of us."

"No, not quite that, tho' she's not many miles off. We've answered her private signal at any rate, for we thought the best way to avoid awkward questions was to seem not to fear them."

"Right, Bo, right, but we're all ready for the worst, if it comes out?"

"To be sure, we are as ready as a drawn sword or a fixed bayonet. She seems to be about our own force, and our fellows ought to fight the hardest."

"Why, ay, they needn't expect much if they are taken. Do they know what nation she is of?"

"O yes, by this time."

"Why, right, they have seen us exchange signals—well, if it must be, it must be. But I'd rather 'twas a Frenchman."

"Why, ay, so would I; but after the first two broadsides, you won't find that make much difference."

"Why, no, corporal, I suppose not. But come, I'm ready for the deck, tho' 'tis as much as I can do to walk yet; and as for the youngster, he's not able to speak hardly. But now, where is this light-footed craft, that goes skimming about in a gale of wind like a witch in a butter-boat? Oh, there she is! Mustapha, my boy, lend us a glass."

"Ha, my hearty, what, are you here? I'm right glad to see you able to put a leg out, for we may soon want all the best ones foremost."

"True, old chap, and you're welcome to mine any day. I say, my lads," added Herbert, after a long and anxious scrutiny of the rapidly approaching stranger, "from the press of sail that craft's carrying, I'm in

hopes she's after some particular duty, and may run us by without even taking the trouble to speak to us."

"I hope she may," replied both Mustapha and the corporal in a breath.

"Then hope's all you have of it," suddenly interrupted Cresswell, who had been employing himself with another glass; "I think there's not much more coming to our share—for, there, she's shortening sail—in go her fore and mizen topsails."

"True, boy, true," added Herbert, looking again; "she'll soon be under stern now. Corporal, this is your manœuvre; you shall answer and play skipper if she hails."

"O, just as you like, it's all one to me."

"Very well, then do so—one thing's lucky, she can send no boat aboard. If she asks our name, what do you intend to say?"

"The corporal's gone off deck for a minute," replied Mustapha.

"I'd give something," quoth Herbert, in a half musing tone, "to know what the devil has been that fellow's history afore he took the shilling. When first he thought of starting in life, I'll take any wager it wasn't as a private of marines."

"No, Herbert, he was born to something better than that, I'll swear. He's a queer chap! Drunk or sober, he never lets out a pin's point from which any one might guess anything about him."

"No, Mustapha, no, he's mighty close; but that's no great fault, after all. He's just the boy for our purpose, whether or no."

"Just, by jingo! He's like the kalip's grand vizier can turn a hand to anything. I should like to know myself where he picked up his seamanship. But here he comes. What have ye got in your hand there?"

"Oh, merely a list of the frigates that we may venture to pass for."

"Take care, my boy, that you don't happen to give this craft her own name."

"No, no, let me alone for that."

"See, see, my hearties," interrupted Cresswell, as a row of bright glaring lights shot over the dark waves to windward, "down go the stranger's half-ports."

"Why, hang me, if they're not at quarters!" cried Mustapha.

"Corporal, do these fellows smell a rat?" said Herbert, suddenly seizing the marine by the arm.

"Had I not better make the drummer beat to quarters also?"

"Hold—hold, Cresswell," replied the man to whom these several appeals were made. "Yon fellow only shows his own vigilance, for fear we may be an enemy who has got possession of the private signals by some chance of war; and there, perhaps, he isn't far wrong. Let him make the best of that, however. For us to sound a drum, would be the most imprudent thing possible. We'll be upon our guard, for all that. Run down below and turn the men silently from their hammocks—but not a gun must be cast loose till the orders are given, nor half-port lowered. Eh, Herbert, what say you?"

"Just so, my lad—bear a hand, Cresswell. Corporal, are you ready to speak her? See, she puts down her helm to come under our stern—fore and aft, there, let the men lie down on the deck. 'Tis just possible she may be intending to give us a broadside, and if so, corporal, we must take the thick of it."

"O, ay, my hearty, like a mess of kail brose, the thick as well as thin," replied the corporal; and coolly mounting on the hammock nettings on the weather-quarter, and holding by the mizen-shrouds—a conspicuous mark—the stranger, who had got a cable's length to windward, began to hail.

In that anxious moment which might be pregnant with the fate of so many, the silence on board the frigate could not have been greater had she been, like the poet's

ship, a vessel of the dead. The rustling of the storm, the sobbing of the gust through her rigging, and plashing of the water alongside, were the only audible sounds, except the rushing of the gleaming stranger, as she steadily swept down the wave towards them.

"What ship is that?" were the words now faintly heard through the chorus of the gale.

The corporal made no reply. It was no part of his policy to give any sort of answer first. He, on the contrary, was resolved to know who was his questioner before he risked the committing himself. Waiting till the stranger had arrived at her nearest point of approximation, he pretended not to have heard her hail, but applying the captain's speaking-trumpet to his lips, returned it in the same words.

"What ship is that?"

The stranger, not having the same cause for caution, and anxious not to lose the opportunity afforded by her position, rapidly replied,

"His majesty's ship Alcibiades—what ship is yours?"

The danger was now past, and the corporal, selecting one of the names of the senior frigates on the station, replied, "His majesty's ship Memnon." To this no answer was heard, for the two vessels, urged by the mighty force of the gale, rapidly flew by each other on their various courses, and nothing was again heard but the roaring of the waters as they closed after the departing frigate's counter, and the fierce and melancholy moaning of the wind that swept through their own rigging.

CHAPTER XXI.

A pause—it is the crisis of our fate:
A moment more or less may be too late.

"Bravo, corporal!" cried Herbert, as the Alcibiades swept down proudly to leeward, ignorant of the deceit

that had been so daringly palmed upon her. "That's a noble frigate, and a better sea-boat one needn't wish to have, though, for the matter of that, I'd match ours against her. I don't think she'll trouble us much more with her company."

"I don't know that," replied the corporal, looking after the ship with a far more sad and troubled air than was ever witnessed in general upon his striking but impenetrable features. "If the officers on board that craft know who we are, there's not a ship in the service has half the reason to remain resolutely by us."

"Why, how so?"

"Why, don't you remember?—the Alcibiades was the frigate which was sent on before us with Lieutenant and Miss Livingstone on board—our late captain's son and daughter."

"What! Mr. Ramsay's sweetheart, the young lady as was aboard of us?"

"The same."

"Poor soul! I feels for her; but as for that ragarouche, her brother, I wish with all my heart he was on Mr. Ramsay's island, and Mr. Ramsay in his place."

"It would be more like justice, Herbert, but we can't always have that. But, see, yon frigate's hauling up to leeward of us on the same tack."

"So she is—what does that mean?"

"Why, I'm afraid that she wants to communicate with us, thinking, perhaps, that to-morrow the gale may be gone down enough for her to send a boat alongside. But that must never be, if we can help it."

"Right, corporal; if they once come to know aboard there who we really are, that young fellow will be coming aboard to see his father."

"Well, there then he'll be mistaken, that's one comfort," coolly rejoined the corporal. "But we mustn't let it come to that, if we can help it; for 'twould go sorely against my grain to have to fire into a ship where that young lady's aboard—it's bad enough as it is."

"Yes, that's a true word as ever was spoke; but we must grin and bear it; though how we're to give her the slip I hardly know."

"There's nothing like trying for it, at any rate. She's given us the weather-gage, so we must just set what sail we can, bit by bit, and try gradually to steal away from her; and now, while we have the hands on deck, and they're busy in making the ship snug, my advice is, that we set close-reefed topsails."

"So we will, and after that call the watch. Mustapha and Cresswell shall take charge of the deck till four o'clock, then shall come my turn; and if we can give them the go-by, we will."

"Yes, that will be our best plan, depend on it. They imagine us to be their senior officer, so of course this will facilitate our measures, for they will not presume to be seen prying on the motions of a senior."

Notwithstanding this consolatory belief on the part of those so interested, the Alcibiades, if not actually prying, proved to be no unconcerned spectator. As the pretended Memnon added sail to sail, so did the Alcibiades. The former endeavoured stealthily but unceasingly to creep away, the latter as resolutely followed. Keeping at about eight points from the wind, the frigate, though with a great deal of motion, now went well through the water. But it was all in vain. Dogged by the stranger for ever at her heels, it mattered little what way she made in her advance; every effort at being once more alone and at liberty was frustrated.

As morning dawned, the breeze too varied a few points, and increased so considerably that a reef shaken out during the night in the fore and main topsails was of necessity taken in again. When the corporal returned on deck to consult with his colleagues, he found how abortive all their attempts had been to get rid of the Grecian hero still to leeward.

After the proposal and rejection of various plans to bring about the end so much desired, it was finally

agreed that one resource alone remained—that of fleeing to the immemorial refuge of the vast family of doubters, and trusting to the chapter of accidents for a result no foresight or concert had been able to effect.

On one point, at any rate, they had to congratulate themselves; the wind continued so fresh, and the sea so high, that the greatest danger still attended any attempt to send a boat on board.

"If fortune should so far favour us," said the corporal, "as to send a strange sail in sight to leeward, we must play the senior officer, and order the Alcibiades off in chase."

This idea was instantly approved, and as the day wore on, the most anxious watch was kept for anything like a gleam of canvass upon the far horizon. But there is a sort of cross destiny that seems ever to wait upon mundane affairs, thwarting us when we can least support it, favouring us when we least expect it.

Were speech an attribute of that amiable creature the spider, I make no doubt but we should be informed that when most hungry he can catch the fewest flies.

On any other day at least fifty sail would have been easily counted; on this, the severest scrutiny could not detect one. More and more gloomy appeared the brow of the corporal as the evening of the second day approached, and the Alcibiades still seemed determined to hang on their skirts, until she could send a boat aboard. At last, when the subsiding sea promised to allow of some chance of success, she hove to, lowered a cutter, and sent an officer away in it for the frigate.

Mustapha, who was the first to observe this, no sooner perceived the boat come towing out from under the lee of the Alcibiades, than he reported its appearance to Herbert and the corporal, who were in the captain's cabin, puzzling over his charts in an attempt to prick out the exact position of the ship: the news of the invasion thus intended, however, quickly brought them on deck.

"Well, corporal," said Herbert, as he looked at the lieutenant and cutter now approaching, "this pretty farce is coming to an end at last! What shall we do with this boat? Of course the moment that Lufftackle steps on our quarter-deck he'll hear of the absence of all the officers, and so guess that there's a screw loose aboard of us somewhere. Shall I order the drum to beat to quarters?"

"No, man alive, not for anything 'twixt this and China; it's never too late to come to that. If we manage matters rightly, we may still keep up the joke, and get that boat back again to the frigate without any harm being done."

"Well, my boy, you're up to many a wrinkle that I'm not—I admit it readily enough; but if you manage to send that fellow back to his ship, without allowing him to know that this craft isn't under the king's pendant,—why, I say, you'll do more than any other man on board can dare to try his hand at."

"Have I your orders to attempt it?"

"Ay, to be sure you have, with all my heart."

"Very good; stay you here then, and if the boat comes alongside before I return to the quarter-deck, order the master-at-arms to detain her alongside, without even the lieutenant's coming up till I'm there." And down went the corporal to the main-deck.

While, however, this dialogue had been passing between the mutineers, the news had spread through the ship, with an electric rapidity, that a boat was coming. The seamen who had joined the mutiny merely crowded on the gangway and forecastle, to see, in their own language, what was in the wind. But the lately freed officers had a far deeper stake in the matter; and when they heard what was about to occur, it excited in their bosoms emotions of the most agitating nature. Would the real truth be found out, asked they of one another; and if so, what would be the result? In case of the Alcibiades coming up alongside,

and calling on the crew to return to their allegiance; would they do this, or dare to carry their outrage so far as to put the matter to the issue of the strong arm? In that case, could they not prove of material assistance, and how? Could they not facilitate the appearance of the naked and startling truth, and, rising on the present holders of the ship, thus put them between two fires?

In answer to these stirring queries came the not less fearfully exciting remembrance—if we fail, we are doomed to the yardarm! The mutineers had threatened, and they knew the nature of the ringleaders too truly to doubt that they would hesitate for a moment in executing the threat.

Not that the mere risk of death deterred them from making the attempt in behalf of their defied and broken discipline; for that, under any circumstances, they were sure to have encountered; but in addition to the ordinary chances of shot and sword was now added that of the halter—a terror from which every one involuntarily must shrink; and this some two or three of the most daring were discussing, when their ears were greeted by the sound of oars coming from the boat of the Alcibiades, as she pulled up under the lee-mizen chains of the frigate.

CHAPTER XXII.

The peril's imminent—Fear holds its breath—
While desperate Courage cries, Give death for death.

"MASTER-AT-ARMS, step into the main-chains, and see that no one leaves that boat till leave is given from the quarter-deck," said Herbert, as he beheld the near approach of the Alcibiades' cutter, while the master of the ceremonies had not yet again made his appearance in the person of the corporal.

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the master-at arms, doing as he was bid; and, stepping out into the projecting

space of the main-chains, he asked, "Shall I hail the boat, and tell her to keep off at once?"

"No—on no account," suddenly interrupted an authoritative voice. Herbert felt a finger laid upon his shoulder, and turning quickly round, started back with a degree of deep surprise, that was not altogether untinged with horror. The evening was gradually beginning to shade in, and by his side he beheld standing what he conceived to be a post-captain, in the very same undress as that in which he had last seen Captain Livingstone, on the evening before his mysterious disappearance. Since the meeting, the ringleaders had all been accustomed to wear swords, and with an involuntary swiftness Herbert's fingers griped the handle of his.

On seeing this, the captain's features involuntarily relaxed into a smile, and breaking silence with the words, "Is the disguise so perfect?" the mutineer at once recognised the voice of the corporal.

"Well done, shipmate!" exclaimed the man; "when all other trades fail, you may make your fortune at acting. But step forward, man, for you're only just in time."

As Herbert said this, the Alcibiades' boat shot up alongside the starboard gangway; the forecastleman, stationed for that purpose on the spare-anchor, threw into her bows the guess-warp by which to hold on; and the bowman having secured it to the thwarts, the oars were laid in, and the lieutenant rose in the stern-sheets as if to ascend.

At this juncture forth stepped the corporal in the captain's uniform, and placing himself directly in the gangway, prevented the possibility of the lieutenant either gaining the quarter-deck himself, or seeing much of what was going on there. With the brusque manner of a captain some ten years posted, the assumer of Livingstone's dignities demanded, "Have you brought us any letters, sir?"

"Yes, sir," replied the lieutenant, taking off his hat

with the utmost respect; "there are some which came out of the last mail from England, and one from the master on board the Alcibiades to the master of the Memnon, relating to the return of some charts which our master lent him six months since at Port Royal."

"O yes, I saw them, and very nice charts they were," replied the fictitious captain, with the utmost readiness, though of course he was wholly ignorant even of what coast it might be to which they referred. "I am sorry to tell you," continued he, "that the master is at present suffering under a severe attack of fever, and confined to his cabin, being quite delirious; the note you have brought is of little use, though if you'll give it me, I'll read it and see if it requires an immediate answer."

"Thank you, sir," replied the lieutenant, touching his hat, and taking the note from his pocket; and giving it to the side-boy, it was handed up to the corporal, who unhesitatingly breaking the seal, and pretending to run his eye over the contents, exclaimed—

"Ha! I thought it was the same set—tell the master, that the book in question was despatched to him nearly a month ago by the Levant brig, which expected to have fallen in with you soon after. Did she not do so?"

"No, sir."

"Indeed! well, I'm sorry for that; but as soon as the master recovers, the matter shall be seen to, though I trust, before then, that it will have reached its rightful owner. Have you delivered the mail-bag to my people?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very well, then, I think you had better lose no time in shoving off for your own ship, for I'm afraid you'll get hurt, if you remain alongside much longer—the sea is running so to leeward, that I expect to see you swamped every minute."

"I fear so too, sir; but might I ask first, as a favour, to see the first lieutenant, Mr. Brown, for a few minutes?

we are old messmates, and if I could only speak to him for a——"

"I'm very sorry, sir, very sorry indeed, that yor cannot have that pleasure; for the fact is, that Mr Brown is suffering from a touch of the same complaint that confines the master, so that I have at present forced upon me the treble duty of captain, master, and first lieutenant, all in one; but if you have any letter or message, it shall be safely delivered."

"Thank you, sir, I wrote no letter, having calculated on seeing him; but if you will allow the kind regards of Lieutenant Carey to be given him, I shall feel much obliged to you. I heard lately from our part of the country in Yorkshire, and his family are all quite well."

"Very good sir, he shall be informed of the fact—and, Mr. Carey!"

"Sir?"

"As soon as you get on board, give my compliments to your captain, and say, I wish him to cruise for the night, considerably to leeward of me. I have had information of a rich homeward-bound French convoy, so that he is just come in time; the more space we can cover, the sooner we shall hit our prize—he needn't fear losing sight of the Memnon. If I fall in with the enemy, he will be sure to hear my guns come booming down this heavy gale; and if he is the lucky man, he must throw up a few rockets, to enable us to join in the chase. But tell him to be sure and not give any false alarms, for that would spoil the sport for both of us; and now shove off."

"Ay, ay, sir, I will be sure and deliver your commands;" and the lieutenant once more uncovering his head in deference to his supposed superior, gave the word, "Out oars," as he prepared to resume his seat. At that word up flew the twelve ash-blades of the rowers, while the two bowmen began to cast off the ropes by which they had ridden.

Heartily indeed did the corporal's colleagues now congratulate themselves on the admirable self-possession with which he had played his part. If the sea men felt less regret at the avoidance of a hostile collision with a frigate of their own nation, they were not less amazed at the comedy they had seen so sustained, or less quick at appreciating the powers brought into play to sustain it. In the bosom, however, of the corporal—so masked to all appearance—so stern and cold—so self-possessed—the emotions of joy were deeper than in any one else on board.

With the happy feeling of release from a line of conduct that the bosom would fain yet could not truly approve—with the proud consciousness that a union of abilities on his part had effected what, as Herbert had truly said, none other in the ship could have dared to attempt,—he stood in the entry port of the frigate, watching the bowmen of the cutter cast off the last turn of the guess-warp from the thwart, preparatory to their return.

The line yet lingered in the hand of one of them—the boat was beginning to drop astern—when his eagle eye detected a letter thrown into the middle of the crew, from one of the ports under the main channels.

"Hold fast, bowmen," cried he, with a vehemence and strength of tone that at once arrested the cutter's departure.

"A puff of wind has blown a letter out of my hand into the middle of your boat—there it lies, under the second rower's feet on the starboard side; pick it up, and give it me."

"Do nothing of the sort! for God's sake!" replied a low but energetic voice, as one of the men held it in his hand, irresolute how to act, while the second speaker, being out of the corporal's sight, entreatingly continued: "For the love of heaven, my men, give that letter to your lieutenant. Pull away, sir—as you value your life, pull away for your ship; this is not the Memnon

frigate, but the-———." The name was lost. "The crew have risen upon their officers—the captain has been mysteriously assassinated—the officers confined to their cabins, and the mutineers have command of the vessel. That fellow on the gangway is a corporal of marines, in the captain's clothes—pull for your lives!"

As these startling revelations were made, it would have been difficult to say what feeling most predominated in the faces of the officer and his boat's-crew then alongside—incredulity at the tale—horror at the facts that it narrated—rage at the imposture practised on them—or mirth at the ridiculous picture it called up, of a corporal of marines playing off in a post-captain's uniform.

Of the passions, however, thus awakened on board the frigate, there could unfortunately be little doubt. Herbert had been an attentive listener to the whole, and believing that the game of delusion was now finally and irretrievably lost, he called to those around him—

"Down on the main-deck, some of ye, and cut that tell-tale thief into fifty pieces, be he who he may. Quick, my lads, there to the gangway, with a few two-and-thirty pound shot, to stave that boat in, if the crew don't surrender."

These most impetuous orders, though prevented by the wind from reaching those most concerned, as being by them the most jeopardised, sounded, nevertheless, but too plainly in the corporal's ear; and with a presence of mind that more distinctly proved him superior in intellect to his comrades than any other service which he had yet rendered them, he put one hand behind his back, as he stood in the entry port, so that it might be seen by his confederates, towards whom it was waved, as much as to say, "Hold!" and at the same time looking towards the boat's crew, he said, in tones perfectly composed and unabashed—

"Hand that letter up directly, sir, without minding the gibberish of that poor maniac—it is the master whose

voice I heard speaking to you just now through one of the ports; he must have escaped from his cabin in his delirium, and so told you of one of his raving follies."

The letter, meanwhile, had been handed to their lieutenant, who stood irresolute how to act. But a sudden shriek, the sound of pistol-shots, and the accompanying death-struggle within the hastily-closed port at once decided him.

"No, no," said he, "that was no master's face—it was a boy's, a midshipman's. Cast off the guess-warp. Give way, my men, for your lives give way!"

"Pull another stroke, and you're a dead man!" interrupted Herbert, who had sprung upon the hammock nettings, and then down into the chains, from whence he now levelled a pistol at the lieutenant's head. The officer distinctly heard the voice, and turning round, fixed his eyes fiercely and intently on the mutineer, and thus, while contemplating the barrel levelled at his life, peremptorily reissued his command.

"Give way, my lads, for the frigate; give—" way, he would again have added, but forth flashed Herbert's pistol; and as its short, sharp report was borne down to leeward, the lieutenant sank mortally wounded upon the stern-sheets.

"In with your cold shot, my men, in with your shot!' cried Herbert, flinging down his too fatal weapon, and seizing a thirty-pound shot in both hands.

"Pull! pull!" cried the gallant but dying lieutenant, as he still grasped the blood-stained letter in his hand, and waved aloft an arm.

But the men had either got confused from the suddenness of the attack, or were else not disinclined to return as willing prisoners. Unfortunately, however, for them, they acted neither part. Some pulled—some stared. A whole shower of shot came pouring on them from the gangway and rigging of the frigate, and one of them entering the boat, struck on an oar, and falling heavily on the bottom of the cutter, she began to fill.

"Keep a couple of your jackets on the leak, and pull for your very lives," gasped the lieutenant, as the cutter got out of reach. The men did as they were bid, and now, when unanimity was too late, endeavoured to urge their shattered craft through the waters with their utmost speed.

"Quick, my lads," cried Herbert, perceiving the efforts they were making; "that boat must never reach the frigate. Cast loose two or three of the lee-quarter-deck guns, and add another shot to their charge. Quick —bear a hand now, before the Alcibiades gets up to her assistance. See, she's filling her maintopsail and hauling up towards us."

Speedily as the command was given were the gun-tackles cast loose; but the mutineers were spared the necessity of further pouring out their fire on their defenceless countrymen. At every stroke of the cutter's oars it was plain that the water gradually gained on them within, since the gunnel sank deeper and deeper in the wave; her speed lessened; her men felt the increasing weight upon their strength, and at a moment which required all their energy and the lightest boat, the heaviness with which the cutter mounted over the vast seas encompassing her, became increased at every rise, till one, more full and fatal than the rest, struck on her foundering quarter, and poured over the whole boat.

A confused mass of spars, oars, and men, was seen for a moment tossing on the deep amid the rapidly darkening day, and in a few more every being there had ceased to breathe. If death could make a secret safe, that of the mutineers was impenetrably sealed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

And the dark watch in consultation deep,
The lawless bands with troubled bosoms keep.

While this tragic scene had been enacting upon the quarter-deck, and on the open sea around the frigate, one equally dismal had been unfolding its bloody issue below. At the command given by Herbert relative to despatching the tell-tale at the port, Cresswell and Mustapha, backed by some thirty of the crew, had rushed to execute it.

At the hatch of the companion, however, they were met by the boatswain and the carpenter, springing up sword in hand, followed by several of the mates and midshipmen, who, without consulting the officers of the wardroom, had combined with these two warrant officers in this gallant but hopeless endeavour to retake the ship.

Possessed of a pass that was for a moment easily defended, the two latter led the way, and, standing back to back in the hatchway, dealt round with their heavy cutlasses some most destructive blows.

Had they been supported, and the Alcibiades been able at that moment to have sheered up alongside, and thus effectually to have distracted the attention of the mutineers, they might have stood some chance of success

But there were too many contingencies for any prudent man to have risked so dangerous a battle. It is true, that from the boatswain's great personal strength, and the unflinching authority he had been so long accustomed to wield over the crew, they shrank more from this encounter than they would from that of most men in the ship. Still, when the corporal, whose attention had been attracted by the struggle, rushed down on the main-deck with a few determined followers, and took them in the rear, they were cut off to a man The boat-

swain himself, the carpenter, and two of the first midshipmen, were, however, secured as prisoners, and, being bound beyond all hope of escape, were carried on deck as culprits in the highest degree, who had despised the warning, broken through the law, and incurred the last penalties.

The other poor lads, whom their misdirected gallantry had led into this toil, were all slaughtered, and in a few minutes' time consigned to that hasty grave, above which a few minutes before they had floated in health and strength.

A fearful crisis for the mutineers was at hand: and that which at a cooler moment would have excited the grief of the whole ship's company, now scarcely attracted a single thought, in the unfeeling fury and savage flush of coming battle. Although a hundred eyes had been fixed on the frigate during the scene of the cutter's destruction alongside, still from the distance and the decreasing light, all that her captain and officers could descern was the fact of some extraordinary skirmish, the firing of a pistol into his boat, and her subsequent sinking.

Had he been able to have secured the letter on the delivery of which the scuffle arose, his doubts would of course have been long since terminated; but that, of necessity, perished with the ill-starred officer who died in his attempt to deliver it.

To fill the Alcibiades' main-topsails, beat to quarters, and stand as near as the wind would permit to his hitherto supposed senior, was the work of the first few seconds. A hurried consultation then followed, between the captain and his officers, as to what could be the right interpretation of the outrage they had beheld.

Still the English blue pendant and ensign waved from the mast and peak of the pretended Memnon, and therefore they could scarcely believe that she was a French man-of-war playing this trick upon them, or why not have captured the boat at first going alongside? Why not

when of equal force, possessed of the weather-gage, and already compromised by the commencement of hostilities—why not assume her own national colours, and begin the action?

No; the officers of the Alcibiades rejected this conjecture. What then could she be? Strange and startling as the real truth appeared to them, it now began to speak for itself in the minds of all; a conjecture doubly strengthened by their observing two reefs shaken out of the topsails, and the close-reefed fore and main courses hauled on board the suspected frigate, to enable her, if possible, to turn her position to windward to such account as would effect her escape, or at any rate enable her at once to keep her wind and increase her speed.

Hesitation as to the course his duty urged him to pursue, was now felt no longer by the captain, and in the same breath that he ordered the first of his weather broadsides to be opened from the main-deck, he commanded the sail-trimmers to prepare for showing to the breeze the same stretch of canvass as that beneath which the mutineers' frigate sprang upon her path, from one mountain wave to another—her sides so lashed by the sea-foam as to call up images belonging rather to the gigantic days of our earth, and seeming to portray the agonized speed of some huge hunted mammoth.

While these steps were being taken on board the Alcibiades, the mutineers were occupied in matters still more fearful and solemn. Then did the weak, the timid, the vacillating, find, in those brief seconds, room for repentance more ample, than ever a long life had before afforded them. The relentless, the daring, and undaunted, grew firmer in the hour of trial, though, alas! it was also the hour of blood; and the chiefs who but four-and-twenty hours before had resolved that death was the worst they had to dread, and that death to them was nothing, had now opportunity to consider and experience it in all its forms, not only as it affected them-

elves, but all around, as well in the hurried stroke of battle as the more deliberate one of judgment.

The first duty to which they addressed themselves was the setting of more sail; and while these orders were being executed they assembled at the capstan-head.

"What is to be done with those prisoners?" demanded the corporal, looking at the two first midshipmen and warrant officers, who, bound hand and foot, lay huddled together to leeward, between two of the quarter-deck guns, faint with loss of blood, and stamped with the image of despair,—not such as that terrible emotion appears on the cheek of the coward, but as it is seen in the firm yet hopeless aspect of those in whom a high heart has wrought its utmost to conquer, and can now only teach the best last lesson—how to die.

As the corporal put this question, the looks of his hearers involuntarily fell on the bound and helpless limbs of their pale captives. At first, compassion might have been detected, mingled in the dark scrutiny of their eyes; but, as if the thought of stern necessity came into silence this soft pleader, they were as suddenly withdrawn, and fixed upon the advancing frigate —then meeting on each other's countenances, the fate of the accused was told.

"Are they guilty?" said Herbert, replying with this question to that which had preceded it.

To this no one attempted to make answer, till Mustapha, as the senior, rejoined with averted face, "I fear there can be little doubt of that; as they are taken, so they were bound."

"Can't we afford to pass them over for this once?" asked Cresswell. "They're all game fellows, and their wounds will prevent their being of any further trouble, if they don't take them off altogether. Besides, shipmates, I fancy, if we had been in their places, we should have done as they have."

"And were they now in ours, what would they do?" demanded the corporal.

"Stretch our necks," laconically answered Herbert.

"Ay," quoth Mustapha, "I fear it must come to that."

"It can come to nothing else," concluded the corporal, "if we wish to retain our power. If we show a wavering front now, it will take four times as many lives hereafter to place us on the same ground, and, what's still more to the purpose, lives four times as valuable to us; for in all probability they will be the lives of some of our own best men, running out of rule, from mere whim, and the belief that we're too soft to uphold our own words or discipline. In this case these fellows would always have been a puzzle and a plague to us. Their rank as officers is sufficiently high with the crew to give them weight in any attempt to take the lead out of our hands, should they at any future time come over to our side, but not high enough to bind them to their own. They have run their heads willingly into the noose, and so let fortune give them the result of their own folly. Depend on it, we're lucky in thus getting rid of them. What say you, Cresswell—you're youngest?"

"Why, I should have liked to keep hands off them, if possible; but, perhaps, as you say, it may be less cruel to let them swing."

"And you, Herbert?"

"Yes."

"And you, Mustapha?"

"Why, as the Kalip said, I think a touch of the bowstring can't well be awoided. They're brave boys, I admit, all on 'em, but I'm dubersome whether we can with safety awoid sending them to join Julyus Cæsar."

"Nothing remains then, Herbert, but for you to give the orders," said the corporal; and in less time almost than it had taken this unshrinking conclave to hear evidence and pronounce doom, the fatal ropes had been rove at the fore and main yardarms on either side, and the victims noosed and toggled. The mates were allowed the preference of their rank, and placed to windward,

the warrant officers being consigned to the other or starboard side—the ship facing the Alcibiades—which, with all the wish, was powerless to save them.

A few hurried minutes were now allowed to the poor fellows to prepare themselves for the last awful change; but, in the present case, this seemed only sufficient to enable them to look the king of horrors more plainly in the face. At the very moment that the Alcibiades opened her fire, she unconsciously gave the death signal for those whom she was striving her utmost to protect.

A shrill whistle was heard amid the dull reverberations of her cannon, and the sharper whizzing of her shot. A heavy tramp followed on the decks of the frigate, and the four human bodies, rising swiftly through the air, soared to their several death stations. A momentary check was seen on all four points, as the various toggles came in contact with the block sheaves—the frail ropeyarns simultaneously gave way—each body fell heavily some eight feet towards the sea, and was then as suddenly rehoisted. The calls of the boatswain's mates piped belay, and the deed of death was done. A few faint muscular struggles ensued with the strongest, and they then swung pendulous to the surging gale, that seemed to mourn their dreadful and untimely fate, as it moaned and swept around them.

In this terrific manner, with the four strangled bodies of her junior officers hanging at their yardarms, did the mutineers now rush into action.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Hard is the fight by slaughter only won,
And all that valour ever did—is done.

"MUSTAPHA," said Herbert, "go you down on the main-deck, and see if our lee-guns are so far clear of the water as to bear working. I fear that in this gale, to leeward though she be, the frigate yonder has some-

what the advantage of us, by being able to work her weather broadside well enough, whatever may become of our lee one. Corporal!—where's the corporal gone, Cresswell?"

"Why, there he stands."

"Ay, so he does. Corporal, my boy, right about face—here—what shall we do with those officers below? If they should rise on us in the heat of action, perhaps when we may be beating back any attempt of the Alcibiades to board us, we may not find it quite so easy a matter to deal with them as those fellows yonder," (pointing, as he spoke, to the pendent bodies of the dead) "The sword is drawn—it's no use now hugging the scabbard. We ought to take sure steps to guard against such an evil, and quickly, for the fire of that craft to leeward begins to grow a little hot, and we must tackle him in earnest."

"Right in all that, I grant, Herbert; but still let us not be harsher than necessary. All the end we want to obtain may be gained by lashing the lieutenants hands, locking them into their cabins, and taking the keys into our own keeping. All the oldest and strongest of the midishipmen are killed. The poor boys who are left can do nothing without a leader. The gunner will be busy in the magazine."

"Not he—he refuses to do any duty but under the first lieutenant's orders."

"Well, perhaps he's right; but if he didn't choose to risk his neck before his brother warrants were hung, I don't think he's likely to do so now; but to make all sure, lash him hands and feet too, and nail him up in his cabin."

"Cresswell, my hearty!" said Herbert, turning to Cresswell—"do you hear about these matters? jump below with a few hands, and see it attended to. Ah! here comes old Mustapha, to report what use our main-deck guns will be to us."

"Mighty little, I promise you; I have had a try at

the one furthest aft in the cabin. But there, bless ye, more than half the time the muzzle of the gun's under water; and it's only when the ship pitches down into the trough of the wave that we can get anything like a steady aim and chance to fire."

"I'm sorry to hear that, Mustapha, for such work requires plenty of time, and a precious good gunner."

"You may say that!—On an even keel we might fight the ship well enough, heavy as it blows, and might still do so bravely, were our enemy to windward; but my advice is, if ye want to give that thief with the long name something to stop her jaw, you'll stand no further nonsense, but put your helm up, and either run her slap on board amidships, and take the chance of her going down all standing, or else cross her hawse a pistol-shot ahead, round to under her starboard bow, and engage her within ten yards to leeward; we should then understand of her a little; but as for pottering away out here, wasting good powder and shot, we might as well, for all the world, be wagging our gib at Julyus Cæsar."

"Bold work that, old Kalip!—Corporal, what say you?"

"Why, I think it's good advice, as well as bold; and perhaps—or I should rather say without a doubt—it's just what the Alcibiades wants to do by us, if we would let her; only, having given up the weather-gage herself, she finds it no easy matter to get it back again. She'll annoy us before long where she is, for her shot are beginning to fall truer, d'ye see, as her men find out their range; and if she could, as Mustapha proposes that we should do by her, get within pistol-shot to leeward of us, our lee guns would be silenced, and her weather broadside play the very devil. As long however, as we choose to hug the wind, that she can't do, for if we haven't the heels of her, she certainly has no advantage in that way over us."

"Well, then, shall we up helm and do it?"

"Ay, to be sure—a short battle and a merry one

should always be a mutineer's choice. The wind has been drawing gradually aft for the last twelve hours, and once settle the hash of that Trojan to leeward, we may make Mr. Ramsay's island in no time, and start a privateering at once."

"Not so fast, old Harrem Alraskid. If we bear down, it's very true we shall have a good chance of ending this plaguy unlucky business sooner. That I admit, as well as you and Herbert; but remember, if we once come to close quarters, few will be left alive, when the business is done, in either ship, whether for privateering or anything else."

"We've all been in actions before now, over and over again, and seen no baby's play in them either. But remember, I warn you solemnly, those who live through this night will have seen one of the most bloody frigate actions that ever was fought upon the seas. This will be no ordinary turn-to—no English bull-dog against a French cock—when, as soon as the latter has had an honourable trimming, he falls back upon his 'fortune of war,' and hands over his sword. No; this is bull-dog to bull-dog. Men fighting with halters round their necks, against men who would think it ten times worse than death to be beaten by a crew of mutineers."

"We have the advantage of the weather-gage. If we give it up lightly, we shall never repent the act, 'tis true, for we shall never live to do that, but we shall foolishly put the victory into our enemy's hands. As it is, we possess the power of bringing the matter to the last issue at any moment; and my advice to you is, that we try, first of all, how far fortune will favour the brave, by keeping as far to windward as possible, and so firing at the Alcibiades' spars, try if we cannot first disable her, and then give her the slip."

"By doing this we shall save the lives of our men, and the efficiency of our ship—the two most valuable properties of a privateer; and shall be ready to commence at once, as old Mustaphy observes, that cruising

on our own account for which he is so anxious. Were we, on the other hand, to follow his plan, Herbert, though I admit it to be a bold and seamanlike proposal, yet, as you know very well, we must lose half our crew in attempting it; and even if ultimately successful, our ship would be so riddled as to remain scarcely in a condition to swim, much less to start on a cruise."

"Well, Mustapha, what do you say now to that advice of the corporal's?"

"Why, Captain Herbert, I must admit that the corporal seems in this matter still to have the longest head amongst us, and he's said some most convincing things. Julyus Cæsar himself—and he, you know, was the most dashing marine as ever I heard tell of—even he could not have argufied the matter in a more shipshape style; so, as in duty bound, I give in; though I must say I haven't got that affection for a long running fight that I have for a good stand-up muzzle-to-muzzle action."

"Why no, Mustapha, neither have I; but then, as the corporal says, 'tis likely to be a much more winning game for us."

"And not only that, Herbert; but consider—the men on board that frigate are, after all, Britons like ourselves, and they are but doing their duty, and know not what provocations we have continually had to goad us into this madness for the last two years; so if we can avoid taking more lives than are strictly necessary to our own self-defence, we ought to do so; for there's both truth and kindness, after all, in the old Scotch saying—'Hawks shouldn't pike out hawks' een.'"

"Well, I think there's truth in that too, corporal; but how are we to manage with our lee guns, which, you hear, are nearly useless to match our enemy, who has a whole broadside to work us with."

"Never was an evil that man could not remedy in some degree, if he tried. What's to hinder us from noisting up from the weather-side of the main-deck one or two of the long eighteens, and using them in the

place of these carronades? It is not so much the number of shots that a ship fires by which the battle's won, but the aim and certainty she sends them with."

"Ay, man alive, it's all very well talking? but think of the difficulty, in such a sea and gale as this, of moving about a pack of lumbering long guns, as if they were so many pocket pistols. Think of that, corporal."

"Ay, think of it, for *I* have done so already, Herbert; and the greater the difficulties to be overcome, the greater the credit for doing so. The matter needs but determination to accomplish. Give me but twenty hands on the main-deck, while you, Herbert, remain to assist me here, and I engage, in less than half an hour, that we have a battery of four long-pounders to open from the quarter-deck, if not more. You, Mustapha, as the best helmsman amongst us, attend to the conn. Cresswell's a good shot; as soon as he comes up from the lower deck, let him attend to answering the Alcibiades' fire as well as he can in the meanwhile, and so no time will be lost. Is that agreed, Herbert?"

"With all my heart; and now, what guns do you want to bring up?"

"The foremost guns on the larboard side, my boy; and this is my reason. Should it at last become necessary for us to adopt Mustapha's manœuvre of bearing down, to range up under the Alcibiades' lee, we shall have to lie head and stern, and the guns we shall want to work be those of the starboard side, the same in fact, as we must now play upon her. By taking away, therefore, those on the larboard side of the main-deck for our present wants, we shall rather strengthen our future force than weaken it."

"True, corporal, so take the crews of the three foremost guns to help you. By which way will you have them hoisted on deck?"

"Oh, by the gangway; you see and get the carpenter's crew to remove the skids and gratings. and get the necessary whips and tackles on the mainstay and fore-

yard, while I go below and unship the guns from their carriages, and parbuckle them over to the right spot, ready for hoisting."

"Very well then, make haste, for I shall be ready before you. Up there, two or three hands, into the maintop, and get a whip on your mainstay. Send up some foretopmen aloft, to get a tackle on the foreyard to windward there."

As the orders were issued, the ready and unconquerable seamen sprang to execute them.

By this time, as had been anticipated, the crew of the Alcibiades had in a great degree ascertained the range of their opponent, and the shots came whizzing fast and thick about the heads of the mutineers. Several had struck her hull, many had passed through her sails, and still more whizzed harmless through her rigging. One of the crew had been killed, and two wounded; and, as the corporal had predicted, blood once shed, the mutineers seemed to have already forgotten that the ship to leeward contained men from the same country as themselves.

Wildly as the frequent and increasing gusts came upon them, burying the ship for a time in the spray, as she heeled over beneath the press of canvass; still there were the men stripped to their waists, round which was moistly tied a silk handkerchief, working their guns and cheering each other on with oaths and cries, utterly forgetful that a breath more than usual was playing upon them.

As if this were not sufficient, the seamen sent aloft exerted their utmost speed to reeve the gear necessary for still further increasing their powers of slaughter and destruction; and the suspended corpses at the various yardarms swung mournfully to and fro, while the sighing of the tempest round them might well seem to sound like the wailing of their stricken spirits over the frightful scene below.

CHAPTER XXV.

Give but to hearts like these a better cause,
And Fame ne'er heralded more daring deeds.

STRANGE and terrible as was the picture just described upon the quarter-deck of the mutineers' frigate, that exhibited below was scarcely less startling.

The night had of course now set in, and in order to see with any sort of precision how to work the main-deck guns, it became necessary to have recourse to the fighting lanterns. Strongly cased as these are with horn, the greatest number of them are unable at the best to produce any great brilliancy. Thinly scattered then along the deck, they produced that dim sepulchral light which only reveals the aspect of objects, to invest them with a horror they would not naturally possess.

This, in the present case, was scarcely needed. Groups of half-naked men were seen, as above, throwing themselves into all the strong muscular action of men whose energies of mind and body are all called into play, by the discharge of some labour requiring their entire strength. Now bending their broad but supple backs in running out the guns—now showing their powerful arms while they lowered them here or there as the aim demanded—the lantern light falling strongly at intervals upon their gleaming skins—the various angles of the human figure catching the light—dashed as they were in many places with the blood from their own wounds, or those of their comrades—their ruddy necks, scorched by long exposure to the fervour of the sun, and teeming with black curly hair, and their rugged and expressive faces lit up by the struggle of the fiercest passion.

This alone would have composed a picture sufficiently sad and exciting, but some of the most expressive points in relief have yet to be added. These dark spirits of the spot were every now and then immersed to their knees in water, as the heavily pressed and groaning

frigate urged, beyond all reason, through the tumultuous sea, half buried her lee-side ever and anon in the foaming tide, that rushed impetuously through her ports and scuppers, flooding the deck in every direction, and surging up the hollow chambers of her guns with that startling shock which is the distinctive sound of compressed water.

As if this roar, thundering in the ear, were not enough to call forth every firmness of the senses, the clang of the guns continually running in and out—the volleying of their discharge—the shout of voices—the issuing of commands—the howling of the gale—and the creaking of the masts and timbers, were all added; while, from the continued quantity of water remaining to leeward on her main-deck, and reflecting the lantern light in broken spots, the impression conveyed to the mind was that of a man-of-war rapidly and inevitably foundering, amid all the horrors of a night engagement.

While thus, then, the seamen endeavoured to overcome, by their energy and resolution, the obstacles thrown in their path by the position of the ship, the corporal was faithful to his word and plan; for, within the time he had named, four of the main-deck eighteen-pounders had been hoisted to the quarter-deck, and, though with considerable difficulty and the maiming of two of the crew engaged in the operation, an effectual fire was at last opened on the frigate to leeward. During the chase, which had meanwhile been continued, it became apparent that the ship of the mutineers was somewhat the better sailer of the two.

"Now, my boys," said the corporal, as he himself opened the fire of the first gun, transferred with so much difficulty, "I think we've hit on the way of working those jolly dogs to leeward. The old frigate draws ahead bravely; and every point she bears further forward from the Alcibiades, the better chance we have. Even now his shot are beginning to strike us less. A few minutes more, and we shall be out of her way

altogether. Load quickly, therefore, my boys—aim high—and if we can only knock away a few of her sticks, she'll go trundling down to leeward like a bag of sand. Steady and cool with your aim now, and fire when the frigate pitches. Cresswell, you look to the two foremost guns—I'll attend these two aft. Up with her breech a little more—so, give me that smaller coin. Let us once draw fairly ahead of our enemy, and her battery is as good as silenced."

After looking long and attentively over the muzzle of his gun, the corporal watched the rising of the frigate, and as she gained the summit of the wave, fired.

"Bravo!" cried Herbert, "that shot was well fired, my boy, though a little of the highest. I do believe it carried away her maintopmast. Hasn't it, Mustapha?"

"By the piper of Moses, I think it has. No. It has though—there stands the spar—surely does it. Here, Herbert, take you the glass—your eyes are stronger than mine by a good deal. What do you make out?"

"I'll tell ye in a few minutes. Oh, I see—Hurrah, corporal! try your hand at it again—you've shot away her maintop sailyard just in the slings. There—her men go aloft to secure the sail, and send the remains of the spar on deck. Ha! away goes the canvass. This gale might make short work of anything—cut up into rags like a shower of paper. Well 'twill be some time before they get a new yard across, at any rate: a few more such shots as that, and we may put our nightcaps on, corporal, and wish them good-night. Fire again. Serve but her foretopsail in the same way, and she'll be up in the wind, and we may leave her like the little boat behind. Now then, Cresswell, it's your turn."

As the words left Herbert's lip, the flash left Cresswell's gun, and away went the shotted charge, skimming from sea to sea in the direction of the Alcibiades, which it hulled, from not having been discharged soon enough. The mutineers had already descended into the trough of the sea before the shot left the gun, and thus obtained a

much lower elevation than that of the corporal's sent from the crest of the wave.

Again and again did they exert themselves to take the best aim that their circumstances permitted, and rarely did they fail in hitting some part of the gallant mark before them. Repeatedly they sent their iron heralds of destruction into the lower timbers and bends of the Alcibiades, and several times through her sails—leaving holes in themselves unimportant, it is true, had not the great pressure of the gale acted on that small beginning, which was only to be dreaded from the end to which it often led.

But though, notwithstanding all their efforts, they could not dishearten the resolution of the chasers, they abundantly called forth evidences of the skill of her captain. However rapidly one after another they might manage to split the sails, they were replaced with an activity and degree of seamanship that could not but call up in the breast of the pursued, that degree of admiration which was the best testimony to the skill, perseverance, and courage of their foe.

More shots, doubtless, than the mutineers so alloted, may, or, perhaps I ought to say, must have fallen short of their mark; for the night was as dark as chaos, and the "still vext" ocean a mass of raging waters, with those constantly occurring culminations which bespeak the greatest depth. It was, therefore, more than probable, that where hope and fancy combined to trace the progress of a shot, as striking their foe, that they should unwittingly deceive themselves.

Amid this confusion, the only object which they had to guide them in their aim and fire, was the glare emitted from the fighting lanterns of the Alcibiades, as, reflected upon the sea, it gleamed forth from the several port-holes —now obscured by the figures of her crew working at their guns—now bursting forth into a vivid blaze at one particular spot, as the discharge of the cannon at any port shot its fiery contents upon the storm—and now

for a brief moment stealing calmly and dimly down upon the troubled waters, more like the happy beam that lights the lover to the chamber of his mistress, than that which it really was,—the death alluring *ignis fatuus* of the deep.

With every departing portion of time it became evident, that the frigate was gaining on the Alcibiades in a manner which, if so successfully continued, would draw the two ships beyond the reach of each other's hostile shot. The warm feelings of gratified pride at this demonstration of his sound reason was rising rapidly in the bosom of the corporal as he first pointed and fired one gun, and then, as the crew spunged, loaded, and ran it back to its place, in the same mode discharged the other. In the very act of so taking aim, exclamations of surprise and anger, and something not unlike a cry of anguish, made him turn round, and there at his elbow, he discerned, in the dire obscurity of the night, three or four men struck down at one fell swoop by a single shot. It had come in through the hammocks of the quarter-deck, knocking before it a large splinter of iron stanchion. This had hit Herbert on one of the temples, and, to all appearance, brained him. The shot itself hit Mustapha just below the left shoulder, for he had been standing talking close to Herbert; and finally, as if not content with its previous execution, it struck the wheel directly in the centre—scattering its fragments in every direction, and killing both the men who were steering, besides wounding some others; it had then made its exit through a port-hole to leeward.

CHAPTER XXVI.

With varying fortune still the fight proceeds,
And now the victim, now the oppressor bleeds.

Although Mustapha had been thus severely wounded himself—for he had lost his arm—he remained so perfectly self-possessed as to seize Herbert with his right

hand, and break the latter's fall. The corporal immediately had his shipmate lifted up with all care.

"'Tis a wile syrocky, Corporal, blows nobody good, as the dervish said: so while I go below, and get my flipper doctored," looking round with the utmost nonchalance at his bleeding limb, "you, my boy, must take charge of the ship;—and here, give me your ear a minute."

The corporal bent his head, while the other whispered, "Sink us if you like, but let us strike nothing save the bottom;—no surrender."

"None," said the corporal, in those deep hollow tones of powerfully excited passion, which bespoke him ready to seal the destruction of all on board, rather than be taken. Then, as he turned away, he added, "But if I live, there is much to be done before we come to that."

"Right, messmate," said the other, departing; and the deck having been cleared, the corporal turned his attention once more to the ship.

The unlucky shot which had just effected so much damage, had, to all appearance, in a few seconds done more for the cause of the Alcibiades than her last half-hour's firing put together. On the destruction of the wheel, there of course simultaneously followed the temporary loss of power over the ship's rudder; and the frigate, which had before been made to hug the wind as closely as possible, no sooner felt herself at liberty, than she immediately fell off four or five points; and then, being a good weatherly ship, held straight on her course. But though she thus gained in speed what she lost in her windward position, her enemy, guessing that some such accident had happened, made the most of her good fortune. She had, in the incredibly short space intervening, continued to shift her maintopsail-yard, and was at that very moment bending a new sail.

When the corporal saw what had happened, he seized a glass, and directing it for a second on the Alcibiades,

he beheld her close-reefed maintopsail in the very act of being sheeted home.

"By the Lord Harry, Cresswell," cried he, "there are some gallant hands aboard that ship; she's shifted her maintopsail-yard already. Those are men, now, it's a credit to beat."

"Ay, but a confounded sight of labour to manage, my dear fellow," replied Cresswell, as the perspiration rolled from his brow in large drops, despite the fury of the gale blowing over him.

"Labour, psha!—man was born to it—what's that? Do you run down into the gun-room, and lash the tiller half a turn a-lee, while I order the carpenters to ship the spare wheel. We must get this set to rights at once. What's that?—what's the matter?—where are these splinters falling from?"

"Why, the mizentop-mast is nearly shot in two, just above the cap."

"Ay?—that's bad; the enemy's fire's growing worse instead of better. Ahoy there, mizen-top-men, up three or four of you into your top, and send a rope down for a couple of capstan bars. Frap that topmast of yours!—quick, now, before it's blown over the side."

"Ay, ay," responded the mizentop men, and aloft they flew to execute the order. Cresswell had already gained the ward-room, and lashing the tiller at such a point to leeward as kept the ship's head pretty close to the wind, in some degree repaired the injury sustained by the loss of her steerage-wheel.

'Carpenter's crew!—where are the carpenter's crew?" next demanded the corporal.

"Here's one," answered one of them.

"What's the matter, sir?" demanded the mate, coming up, and touching his hat with as much deference as if the captain's undress, which the corporal had not yet had time to change, was in reality worn by an owner of the rank it represented. Whether this result was

brought about by the remembrance that his old superior in the department still swung, too terribly cold and real, at the yardarm, or whether he was anxious for the dead man's shoes, it is needless to speculate.

"Quick, for your life, mate; take two or three of your crew below, and get the spare steerage-wheel ready for shipping on deck, in the room of the one that's been shivered to splinters."

"How shall we bring it on deck, sir?"

"Why, take the measure, and if it will pass up the companion hatchway, unship the ladder, and we'll hoist it up; if not, take it forward on the main-deck to windward in the waist; unship the skids and gratings once more, and we'll have it up there in the same way as we hoisted up the long guns. Now, bear a hand with your work, for we can spare anything but time. Ah, Cresswell, have you lashed the tiller already? These shots are falling much too closely from the Alcibiades to be pleasant. I'll show you a movement to puzzle their aim. Forecastle there, send aft to the quarter-deck all the hands you can spare. Afterguard, some of you men down on the main-deck, and when you hear the word, bring up every other fighting lantern from aft to midships; douse all those ahead of that, and tell the crews of the guns to cease firing for the time, for they can do little good."

"Ay, ay," replied the captain of the afterguard, hurrying down to execute the order.

"Now, forecastlemen," continued the corporal, addressing the latter, "one of you run up to the main-yard with the end of this coil of half-inch rope, and pay it down over the bunt of the main course before the yard on deck; as soon as that is done, another must take it up the weather-foreshrouds, and pass it through the aftermost catharpin shroud and pay it down on deck again. Some of you then take and overhaul the bight of it, and make fast with a few ropeyarns four or five of the lanterns, which the afterguard are going to bring

up from the main-deck. Another hand take the other end of the rope, pass it inside the mainfuttock-shrouds, and so on through the slings of the cross-jack-yard down upon deck. We shall then have both the ends to pull and haul on. Clap on upon the second bight, 'twixt the main and mizen-mast, four more lanterns, and report to me when you are ready. Ah, here come the after-guard with the lights. Set them down carefully 'twixt two of the weather-guns; leave one hand to watch them, and the rest come with me to the gangway to get the new steerage-wheel on deck."

By the time that the corporal reached the gangway, he found the carpenters below waiting for him, and the skids and gratings all ready unshipped. The wheel, after a little difficulty, was hoisted up, and by the aid of a few hands to steady it amid the motion of the ship, it was rolled aft. Here it was found that the force with which the former had been dashed from its place had split the supports on which it rested. A few nails and some lashing so far repaired this injury, that the new wheel was shipped, and the tiller ropes having been re-spliced, were instantly bent, the tiller itself cast off from its lashings, and the frigate once more consigned to more manageable means of guidance. By this time the lights were all strung along the temporary gantline formed, by the corporal's direction, amidships of the frigate; and a few hands being clapped on, they were hoisted with the least perceptible motion in rising, until the line itself, being as taut as possible, presented to the view of those on the quarter-deck of the Alcibiades a row of distinct though dim spots of light, which tossed to and fro by the storm and the pitching motion of the ship, led them very naturally to believe that these were the lights of the mutineers' main-deck. With this erroneous impression, they as naturally elevated their guns to what they could not but suppose was the necessary height. Even before, from their long distance, their shot had been allowed very considerable

elevation; now, when these additional points were added, the success of the corporal's stratagem was plainly demonstrated in the whizzing of the Alcibiades' shot at such a distance over the frigate, that, if it boded more damage to the spars, most effectually lessened the number of her casualties in killed and wounded.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Cursed is the hand that sheds a brother's gore,
Or points at such the bloodhounds of the fray.

Although, from the temporary falling off of the frigate from the wind, owing to the destruction of her wheel, she had fallen much to leeward, and thus enabled the Alcibiades partly to gain her lost way, she now commenced the task of regaining it, and in this was succeeding rapidly.

In proportion as the shot of their enemy whizzed harmlessly over their heads between masts and rigging, so did the mutineers exert themselves to pour their deathblows quick and fatally on their pursuers. The corporal, whose eye on that tremendous night seemed to be everywhere, marked well the advantage he was gaining, and in proportion urged on his people to take the fullest benefit of it. With unwearied limb, nerves that knew no flinching, and an eye true in its aim to a marvel, he continued to direct the fire of those four guns which his suggestions had just caused to be placed upon the quarter-deck, and his skill was every moment rendering so effective. Spar after spar did he witness falling wounded and crippled by his shot, and still his enemy's passed over his frigate, rapidly decreasing, too, both in their frequency as well as aim. More and more vividly arose to his mind the hope that his proposal of a running action would prove as sucessful as he had expected, and enable him to get away from his chaser altogether. The wind had continued drawing

more and more aft since the commencement of the action, soon after sundown, and now it was near midnight. An hour, nay even a few minutes, of the success he was at present reaping, and the Alcibiades must drift to leeward, a mere wreck, as far as spars were concerned, and he then be at liberty to bear up a few points, and perhaps on the following morning reach the island where Ramsay was set adrift. The very thought that ere now he might have proved food for the creatures of the forest, or perished himself for want of sustenance, or be so overcome by despair as to have taken refuge in the last error of overloaded reason, inspired him with a degree of fresh courage to presevere and win the course on which he had started. While animated, however, with these very feelings, and as yet intent on directing another gun on the sadly distressed Alcibiades, he, to his astonishment, beheld the lurid line of dotted lights, which had hitherto guided his endeavours, fall suddenly off from the wind a few points, so as to bring her whole broadside to bear on the frigate's quarter. A vast sheet of flame was belched forth from her side aft. Quickly, without an instant's delay, flashed one equally vivid from her bow, and in these two discharges her whole tier of larboard guns were discharged.

Away came the iron storm, hurtling and booming along the torn surface of the deep, many of them making but one plunge never to rise again, others flying from wave to wave, dashing up the spray in petty cataracts on their march of murder, and still more whizzing, hissing through the troubled air their dismal song, and making up in terror all they might want in the actual effect of their humble but more destructive fellows.

It was evident that, in the depth of her despair, the Alcibiades had determined on one grand stroke, and thus took the risk of its faliure, even if it should end in doing harm to none but herself. With eagerly distended eye, and bosom that scarcely drew its breath, the corporal watched the coming of this meteorlike and iron shower.

Swift as the bolt of heaven, and scarcely less destructive in its effect, on it came. Crash went the woodwork, the spars, the groaning timber. High above all the tempest and the storm, swelled the shrill death-scream of the stricken and the dying;—whizz went the errant horde, that, flying above the sad scene below, wounded no one but the dark and stiffened corses of those who still hung at the yardarm. For some seconds the showers of chips, the confusion, the cries for help, everything that could distract the various senses, rendered it nearly impossible to ascertain what was the precise damage which had been done; and then one repeated shout, or rather series of cries, which followed so quickly one upon another as to blend all in one alarming and unharmonious whole, pealed on the corporal's ear. "The mizenmast's falling—out of the way to leeward—out of the way—there falls the mizen."

Too fatal not to be too true, the heavy spar was cut and wounded in many places, and weakened by the loss of the shrouds shot away in the last destructive fire, the heavy gusts of wind that shook it to the very keel, now gradually proved more than its greatly lessened strength could support. The driver was already flying away to leeward in lengthening tatters, and the mast itself gradually bending over in a bow-like form from the point of its severest wound, bent to its fate—gave a loud crack that was distinctly heard above all the tumult—snap, one after the other, went the few remaining weather-shrouds, like overstrained harp-strings, and in the next second the tall pile, topyards and all, fell heavily into the tormented surge below.

"Order, order, my boys—be cool, be calm, and all is well!" was heard in a deep powerful voice, from one whom long and severe trial in almost every description of scene that can most test man's courage, had taught to rise with the emergencies of the hour, and proved the least appalled when the peril was most imminent. "Out with your axes and tomahawks, my boys, and cut away the

wreck. Be cool, now, and steady—cease firing fore and aft—some hands attend to carrying below the wounded. Cresswell!"

"Here am I."

"Take you the wheel, and I'll conn. We must come round to old Mustapha's view of matters after all. Up with your helm—sail-trimmers stand by your fore and main topsail-braces. Ease off to leeward—round in the weather—fore and main topsail-braces: way aloft, and stand by to cast loose the courses—man the fore and main tacks—hands by the weather fore and main clue-garnets. Make haste, my lads, on the fore and main yards—pass the word on the main-deck below, to load the starboard broadside on the main-deck with two round shot and a charge of grape and canister, and man only the starboard guns—let one hand from every gun be sent on deck to trim sails."

"All ready on the foreyard."

"All ready on the mainyard."

"Let fall, ease off the weather fore and main clue-garnets—haul on board the fore and maintacks—man the fore and mainsheets—ease away there the clue-garnets—haul aft the fore and mainsheets."

By the time these rapid and fearless orders had been given, the frigate had paid off before the wind, and then been brought to somewhat upon the opposite tack. Now impelled to the most rapid speed which even that swift ship could put forth, she tore along over the swelling waters, now looming dark and horrible in the depth of their troughs, now breaking into the wildest foam, as their riven summits felt the furious action of the wind. The vast and bellying canvass of her huge courses, close reefed as they were, had not, from the tremendous strain on them, been brought on board at either the tacks or sheets; swelling up therefore by many feet from the deck, they lifted the frigate along lightly over the wave. Though each thread appeared about to be blown away at every gust, still the frigate, like some vast beast

of prey, or wild mountain bull, hunted and tormented to the last pitch of madness, appeared to have turned upon her pursuer with the firm resolve of ending him at once, or perishing in the attempt.

Going at the irresistible speed to which the frigate was now urged, the Alcibiades had scarcely either time or opportunity to meet, with the necessary steps, this total change in the tactics of her adversary. Scarcely had her helm been put down and her sails set, when she appeared ahead. Some cried, "She's running us down;" others roared out, "Starboard—starboard," and a few "port your helm—port." Surprise for a moment had given birth to panic, and where that pale genius of disorder gains admittance, even the best discipline receives a momentary check, if not a deathblow.

The corporal was not one likely to overlook any advantages offered him by the indecision of a foe; well did he know what was the only step that could now be of much use to his opponent, and seeing that neglected, as he imagined, from loss of men and the wounded state of the spars and rigging, he only felt the more determined in the purpose he had formed.

The frigate had already gained within a few yards of the Alcibiades' bow, almost directly in the line of her course, but, if anything, still to windward. A thick mist, however, half rain half fog, which had suddenly blown down from the weather horizon, was rapidly enveloping both the combatants, and rendering still more perilous a manœuvre not very easy in the clearest weather or the smoothest sea. With a view, then, of just crossing under her forefoot, but clear of her bowsprit, and boarding to leeward, the corporal now gave the necessary orders to the sail-trimmers to shorten sail, and then advancing on the gangway, he hailed the men at their quarters—"Stand by on the main-deck, to pour your broadside in the moment we get alongside—fire quick, and after the first shot use plenty of canister. I'll give—"

The words were arrested on his lips by a terrific shock

that hurled him from his feet, but, on rapidly rising, forth flashed his broadside, and in its terrific blaze he saw that he had run foul of the Alcibiades on her lee-bow; and the frigate's spare anchor catching in her lee rigging, at the furious rate at which they were still going on opposite tacks, every shroud to leeward, except a few of the mizen rigging, had been torn away. Shriek upon shriek rose fearfully over the horrid yells and noises of that night as broadside upon broadside was poured into the no longer resisting Alcibiades; and, mingled with these heart-rending accompaniments, were long-continued and agonising shouts, "She's sinking!"—"we're going down!"—"she's sprung a leak!" Crowds on crowds of her still surviving crew, in all the unhesitating fearlessness of danger's last extremity, swarmed unarmed up the sides, channels, and rigging of the frigate, or missing their hold, or failing in the perilous leaps they readily took, fell short between the two vessels, and were engulphed in that devouring element that was in no mood again to render up its prey.

"Cease firing on the main-deck—cease firing!—she's helpless—she's sinking;—cease firing, I say. Will no one run down and make them cease their firing?" But loudly—fiercely as the corporal called forth these orders the din, the screams, the fury of the gale, all contributed to drown his voice;—no one heard, and none obeyed.

With a generosity as impetuous as all his other feelings, he rushed down on the main-deck, that, he might in person effect that which he could bring about in no other manner. In a few minutes he succeeded. The men learnt from his lips that their efforts had been crowned with success, and, giving a hearty cheer, they ceased their fire. Back rushed the corporal to the quarter-deck—he looked around him—where was the Alcibiades? No Alcibiades was to be seen. The gale blew stronger, and in more fitful gusts, and the rapidly increasing mist wrapt the whole surface of the waters in that dark mantle of impervious gray which almost

rendered vision a useless sense, save to convey to the mind the lesson of its occasional impotency.

"Where is the Alcibiades?" he again demanded of the nearest seaman, when his utmost scrutiny afforded him no glimpse of her dismasted hull.

He heard an answer, but he heeded it not; it was given him by a lad—a waister. Feverish, and as if his whole life depended on the reply, he asked another—still the same reply was given. He spoke a third; a bevy of his shipmates and many of the crew of the missing ship gathered round him, and all united in the same reply—

"—She is gone down alongside."

"Who saw her?"

"I—I—I," answered a dozen voices.

"Then where is Miss Livingstone?"

None to this replied.

"Has a lady been saved from the wreck?"

"No—no."

"For God's sake answer me, some of the Alcibiades' men;—are there any here?"

"I—I—I."

"Was Miss Livingstone aboard your frigate?"

"She was—with her brother."

"Where, then, in the name of mercy, is she now?"

A deathlike pause followed, and then the still more terrible reply,

"She must have gone down too!"

In these simple words lay a weight and strength of woe for the iron-hearted corporal that nothing before had ever seemed to possess for him. After standing for hours over the dying and the dead—after wielding unmoved every possible engine for the destruction of his fellow creatures—the bare assertion of the loss of her over whom the mystery of the tomb seemed suddenly to be drawn, did more than the most trying of all parts; and he who could have seen hundreds mowed down like hay without the motion of an eyelash, now, at the men-

tion of Miss Livingstone's probable loss, fell lifeless to all appearance on the deck, bearing so many duplicates of that awful reality of which his illness was but the pale counterfeit.

Often throughout that night was the obvious question repeated among his shipmates—"What to him was Miss Livingstone, any more than to the rest of the crew?" How little did they imagine what would have been the truth of the reply!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

To calmer scenes and sweetly tranquil bowers,
Unpeopled Edens of the tropic wave,
The muse delighted turns her steps to roam,
And paint, and love, that cities never reared.

THE current of our story has so long borne us away from one of the chief heroes of our tale, that we must now avail ourselves of the first opportunity to recur to him, and, in thought at least, "revisit that sad shore" on which had been so savagely turned to perish a being as high in courage and noble in heart as he was unfortunate in his deep trials, and the cruel monsters whom Heaven had permitted to triumph over him.

Guileless of heart, though too bitterly versed in those excesses of oppression to which the possession of limitless power has degraded so many officers not otherwise unamiable, Ramsay, in the Othello-like candour and fearlessness of his disposition, had leaped on shore with the steward's basket, alike unknowing, and unsolicitous to know, what service was intended to be thereby carried into execution,—still less imagining the excess of malignity that was to be perpetrated in his own person.

When, therefore, he beheld the boat shove off, he ran down to the shore, not so much with a view to hurry

off in it, as to hear what further orders were to be given. But as the intelligence of his cruel doom fell upon his ear, the suddenness of the shock was felt like the overwhelming mass which, at the moment least anticipated, buries the weary traveller in its icy masses with a resistless force no strength of the victim can avert, and the depth of whose gloom scarcely the strong light of hope itself can penetrate.

Death, more gloomy from the hazy and uncertain distance at which he appears, stalks forward with a quietude of step that too well denotes his certainty of his prey, while the solemnity of the march freezes the life-blood of his quarry, and denies even the last refuge of the wretched—a speedy grave.

He spoke not—for he saw that appeal was as idle as despair. He would have called a farewell to those with whom he had so long sailed, and shared the perils of the sea—the glories of the fight—but "thick-coming griefs" swelled at his bosom, and suppressed all sound. He would have given utterance to those deep thanks which trembled on his tongue, but gratitude, too powerful for his wishes, expressed itself in unbidden tears.

Drops that no agony of body, no suffering of hardship, could have wrung from him for his own woes, spontaneously burst forth, when he beheld the unlettered love of his rude shipmates—stripping themselves to the skin to add to his comforts—risking the severest penalties of the scourge to testify, in his extremity, that affection which could render him no more powerful aid; and if a silent prayer ascended from his charged heart, it was not to succour, to save, or deliver him, but to bless, to shield, to reward them.

Once alone was he able to raise an arm, and wave them that adieu he could not utter; and then without a sound, scarce even of breathing, he watched the forced departure of those who left him desolate upon the desert; yet untouched in honour, unshaken in courage, and still less broken in that heroic fortitude which might have

done credit to that least complaining, most enduring, of all sufferers—gentle woman.

Dare we, in such a dreadful hour, to question what were his thoughts? They were indeed,—"something—nothing."

One image after another rushed through his mind, with that terrific velocity and strength which for a time threaten the empire of reason; each succeeding, yet none wholly remaining or becoming totally effaced, till at length a series of confused and jarring associations filled up the senses, and the perception of the present, in all its dreadful truth, was alone wanting. But perhaps this mental illness of the moment is a merciful provision of nature to save the intellect from that rude shock which the strength of one sad image, and one alone, might inflict—for, generally, as this tumult is felt to subside, so by degrees there comes up another—the full sense of our calamity in all its undeniable power.

By degrees this mental mist rolled back from the mind of poor Ramsay, and there he still stood motionless, his eyes fixed upon the fast retiring boat, on board which not even the pistol-shot that killed poor Wilson had excited the degree of horror it would at any other moment have called forth.

The quickened speed of her flight was scarcely noticed, and it was still some time before he could believe that the most sad act in the tragedy of his life was at hand—that the world and he were thenceforth severed—the final link rudely broken—and himself a wreck flung by the last wave upon the farthest shore, to perish unaided, unknown, unmourned:—no not that: and then there rushed full upon his mind the affection he had so lately seen displayed to him; and then, O agonising thought! the memory of her in whose love the whole wealth and treasure of his life was hoarded up. That—the most guarded, valued prize—that, too, was for ever lost in the universal wreck of all his fortunes! Yes, there he might indeed be mourned. No silly vanity tempted

him to the belief, but from the bitter madness of his own bosom he could too well gather what also must be hers.

Still disconsolately rapt in the past, he remained, recalling every act, image, look, and, ah! still more, every endearing accent of that voice whose melody he never again could hear—unless the grave had dreams. "Could I but see her," thought he, "for a moment, a second, to carry with me into the solitary darkness of death only one bright glance, one faltering accent, one last farewell! Can it never, never come again?—that form so loved—so watched for—so prized?—last in my waking thoughts—first among the forms of sleep." Here was indeed, the grief too big for utterance, and too deep for tears.

The boat at length reached the ship—her crew clambered up the side—and the dead Wilson was also handed on board. The boat was then veered aft, hoisted up, the maintopsail of the frigate filled, and, as the reader knows, all sail crowded to propel her from the island.

Gradually she sank lower and lower in the bright blue line of the horizon. That glorious and gallant ship, which had so long been his home on the vast waste of ocean—in which he had suffered so deeply, and had loved so well—where he had passed hours of such brilliant happiness, and months of such deep misery—was fading from him like the glorious but pale vision of ambition from the untimely death-bed of youth. Still he watched her sails, till growing into a speck, sight could no longer distinguish the pale spot under the far canopy of heaven, seen now and then as the sudden motion of the frigate caused the sun to light on her lofty royals. As these ceased to throw upon him the only shinning ray that the world seemed still to possess, and he became convinced that he might see her no more, he turned, and, looking on the untrodden strand before him, exclaimed, "Here, then, is my grave!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

Come, Danger, in thy darkest forms,
Spread sorrow, spread thy troubled sea;
Blast Fortune, blast thy bitterest storms,
Nor one, nor all, shall master me.

But though Ramsay felt, in the troubled depths of his spirit, that his fellowship with man was over, and the solace of a more natural and still dearer companion for ever lost to him, still, with the very solemnity of this appalling belief, came more forcibly home the conviction, that the undying essence within, was not to be limited to the narrow bounds of this groveling earth—that, let fortune, fate, or destiny, call it which we will, try us howsoever severely she may be permitted to do, it is but for the span during which we are imprisoned in the clay. The higher and the nobler courage can smile or frown at will, as best becomes the hour, on evils of so short a limit; and though they do, God knows, work out the powerful curse on man, and wring the drops of agony from our brow, they dare not, and they shall not, either crush the spirit, or subdue the divinity within us.

This reflection brought peace to Ramsay, when another might have sunk amid the howlings of despair. Raising himself from the earth, a better and a calmer man, he resolutely turned his glance from the sea, and looked round upon the island with unfallen crest.

Pacing slowly to and fro on the sand, he strove, like the dying gladiator, to conquer, by the indomitable energy of his mind, the wound whose pang was almost madness, and its lips the outlet of the soul. Again and again he turned to gaze upon the waves, and still his thoughts reverted to the one beloved image; and the tears that flowed gently to her memory already embalmed her love—the dearest and the brightest image that the past could display, or the future could deplore.

Sore was the struggle, but the victory was gained at last. The increasing breeze, the glorious sun which still shone unclouded on a spot where all beside was gloom, seconded, with the truth of nature's eloquence, the arguments of his own tried heart; and, determined that death alone should master him, he turned his attention, with a true sailor's elasticity and universal aptitude of mind, to examine what were the resources with which he was about to enter on the disheartening battle before him, and how long his resistance could be prolonged.

The tide having been gradually ebbing, was now nearly approaching once more the same point at which it had been on his landing. His first care, therefore, was to remove the bundle, so kindly thrown upon the strand by the crew of the boat which landed him, and which had in reality cost poor Wilson his life.

When he untied the silk handkerchief in which these various gifts had been hastily tied, and beheld those articles of clothing and use not easily replaced by a sailor at sea, and of which they had so enthusiastically deprived themselves for his aid—when he reflected that this outburst of generosity had been the result of an affection he had never sought to plant, other than by doing his duty—when he thought that these simple, brave, and noble-hearted fellows he might see no more, the big, unutterable note of anguish swelled in his throat, and beating his hands wildly on his chest, he stood for some moments convulsed with a depth of grief which the cold in heart can never know.

Nearly, indeed, did all his hardly sought and dearly acquired fortitude forsake him, fervently did he confess to himself that virtue brings its own reward, when he thought, with just pride, on the tie with which he had bound these men's hearts to his. But grief gave way as rapidly to indignation and rage, when he considered that these very sailors, capable of acting thus nobly, of feeling thus deeply and gratefully, were wholly in the power of any vicious captain to goad into mutiny

bloodshed, murder, violence, or rapine; exposed to the unjust exercise of an arbitrary power, too great and unconfined to be safely entrusted to any man, much less indiscriminately delegated, as it too frequently is, to some of the weakest.

Resolutely bent on accomplishing his views, he would not allow himself any further to brood over the past. Carrying these stores to a safe and dry spot, he determined to know the worst of his sentence at once, and so proceeded to examine the condition of the steward's basket.

Here again the humanity of the tyrant's juniors had defeated the execrable wishes of the despot.

The least supply of the necessaries of life had been the limit apportioned in Livingstone's orders to Sneak, and in those of Sneak to the steward, when the latter was directed to prepare the contents of the "widow's cruse." With these instructions the steward had, to all appearance, strictly complied. A bottle of water, a pound or two of biscuit, and a piece of pork, alone appeared on first opening the basket; and as Ramsay beheld these gifts, a single sigh escaped him, and the emphatic words, "Death is near indeed!" Thinking, however, as the basket was of a tolerable size, that it appeared singularly full for the paucity of its contents, he hastily removed the bottle of water, and detecting some hard substance beneath the napkin which apparently covered the bottom wicker-work, he quickly lifted the linen, and there beheld that for which, solitary and alone as he was, he poured forth as many thanks and blessings on the kind provider as if he had in person been present to witness and to feel them.

What were these articles of treasure? None who have themselves been cast away, and put to the best resources of their ingenuity to preserve that frequent torment, life, need ask such a question; but for the happier of mankind it is easily answered;—a tinder-box, a pistol, some ball cartridge, and a tomakawk or

small kind of hatchet; to this had been added a bottle of rum, which, valuing as a medicine beyond all praise in case of illness, Ramsay firmly determined should never be opened for a less urgent occasion.

As Ramsay viewed this treasure—uncounted gold and orient pearls never yet were of half the value—he felt deeply, strongly, gratefully, that the malice of his enemies had after all been vain; and after that deep humility which springs from the heart to that great Spirit in whose hands we are, the next emotion was that of exulting strength and heroism.

The blood of old Scotland swept tingling through his heart, and rushed with an unquenchable glow through every vein, as, with a sentiment that might have animated the immortal Wallace, he clenched his hand in the air, and, with a shout that rang into the unpeopled wood above, exclaimed, "Please God, I never will be conquered while the life beats in my bosom!"

"What," added he, in a few seconds, and a calmer mood, "if I should even be allowed to overcome the obstacles that surround me, and live in this solitude for many years—be it so. All that such a situation can make man do, shall be done by me, except repine—one only thought excepted;—and were she but here to share my lone sojourn, I would not change my solitary shore—no, not for the cumbrous pomp of oriental greatness, or the gilded shackels of western refinement."

From the early hour of four in the morning till now past noon, nothing like refreshment had passed his feverish lips. A small horn drinking-cup had been thrust in with his ruder treasures in the bottom of the steward's basket: he drew this forth, and, pouring into it a few drops from the bottle of water with as much care and parsimony as if it had been the veritable alchymist's elixir, he, even in the extremity of his thirst, forgot not, like a true knight whose chivalry had survived the age that it adorned, to pronounce *her* name with a blessing and a sigh, as, parched and feverish,

he lingered over the scanty portion of the simple element, with a thankfulness and delight that the finest wines of the *Côte d'or* never yet produced at the banquets of the luxurious.

With a moderation equally Spartan, the rest of his repast was restrained; then replacing the whole of his stores very carefully, and taking his bearings, that he might know where again to find them, he loaded his pistol, and, taking his tomakawk in hand, thrust the former into his waist, to be ready on any sudden emergency, and sallied forth to seek for some place that might be made to afford him shelter for the night.

As he advanced over the rocks, that in many places rose precipitously out into abrupt and romantic headlands washed by the sea, he found that the peculiar and beautiful but tangled forest of the tropics came close down to the domain of the salt monarch, whose potent breath seemed in some places to have been ineffectual in preventing the verdure from even hanging over his aged breast. Numerous little rocky coves did he encounter, worn by the long action of the ocean, which played within its arms clear as the heavens, and seemingly almost as unfathomable, over which the lovely palm nodded her fair and diademed head, as if in admiration of her own beauty. Many a wild tamarind-tree shed its ripened and unplucked fruit upon the briny surface of those deep little pools, which, hollowed into fanciful chambers that might have delighted the peris of ocean for their baths, were protected by the ridges of the rock and promontories, and in many cases supplied by some subterranean channel from the sea, the ebbing and flowing of which with the tide, proved to the eye its connexion with the ocean. In all other respects, these singular pieces of water presented the lonely and enchanted appearance of a small but deep inland loch, surrounded by bowers whose extreme beauty could have owed none of their majestic grace to art; and the secret and gemmed caverns below were often lit up by

an exquisite pale sapphire or emerald tint, as if springing from the profound deep, but caused in reality by the great proximity of the open sea.

From tree to tree clambered in the most wanton beauty numerous parasitical vines, draperied in every possible elegance of form and tracery of arch. The bright but baneful upas displayed its exquisite green foliage down to the very water's edge, while the immemorial cotton-tree, indisputably the monarch of those woods, showered its silver favours on every side, and supported its claims to royalty and respect by its vastness and magnificence.

Behind all this, the canebreak reared its nearly impassable wall of underwood; a thousand birds of the gay and golden plumage of those climes, and parrots innumerable, chattered and fluttered from tree to tree, as Ramsay's footfall awoke echoes that had been hushed since that dread hour when God first breathed upon the face of chaos, and called up all that was lovely out of all that was confused.

CHAPTER XXX.

Bless'd be thy face, sweet Nature! for thy smiles
Are Truth and Beauty ministering to man.
A voice thou hast which never yet reproached,
An ear to which the humblest may complain,
A foe to none, and yet the friend of all,
Earth's only friend entirely sincere.

However great might be the burden which Ramsay had resolved to bear without shrinking, still he could not look around him on the unexpected loveliness of the landscape which burst on his view, after quitting the sandy cove below, without feeling that a part, and no slight one, of his hard fate was remitted, in the beauty of the spot on which he was deserted. His first thought naturally was as to where he should fix his habitation for the night. First he contemplated

taking refuge in some high tree. Knowing, however, that many of the snakes of the tropics are deadly neighbours, and conceiving, even at the best, sleeping at roost is but a poor species of repose, he next conceived the idea of turning his hatchet to account, and by using the canebreak as a back, and cutting down stakes and boughs, he might so form a tolerable hut.

This certainly was better, but even this, after a hammock, was a sad change; and though he was now blessed with all leisure, and the most monarchical command of materials, he thought, nevertheless, that it would be quite as well to put off, any architectural designs, until he knew the kind of enemies against whom he should be required to protect himself. Strongly now came upon his remembrance the deep affecting melancholy of that sacred passage, beginning with "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests;" but little had he at one time imagined that the case would be so completely his own.

Having rejected the shelter of the trees, and viewing with suspicion that of the forest hut, he determined to take a hint from the words just quoted, and see if he, like the fox, might not also find some hole or cavern to betsow himself. The idea once taken up was capable of much impr ovement. As a cavern was to be his abode, it was desirable to seek one on the highest ground; and with renewed vigour and hope he arose, and set out on his journey.

Though many and exquisite were the spots that from time to time presented themselves, he had walked some distance before he perceived any such eminence as that which he desired to obtain, namely, a high hill by the sea-shore. On doing so at last, he found that the site which promised most of those capabilities which he sought, was yet at least three miles distant. This determined him to turn back, make all his moveable chattels into a kind of knapsack, and so commence his march towards the distant settlement.

Having once more reached the spot near which he had been first turned adrift, he was unable for some short time to discover his small stock of worldly wealth. Calming, by a strong effort of mind, the perturbation thus occasioned, he had recourse to his bearings duly taken, and soon came upon everything as he had left it.

The packing, that horrible operation to landbound civilians, did not long detain Ramsay; and having cut with his hatchet two sturdy saplings from the forest—one to support his bundle, and the other himself—he quitted the sand that had so lately seen him cast forth to perish.

With spirits which had so far recovered their tone as to be able thus to adapt their attention to the least expected change of circumstances, what tyranny could hope to crush him, or what malice expect to prove triumphant? A man so steeled may well be said to be clad in proof armour. It was not that he felt less deeply. Often as he walked along, with nothing earthly to yield a sound in reply to his musings, save the mournful breeze that whispered through the long quivering couch grass, did he feel tempted to lie down, and give a brief indulgence to his grief. But he was battling for his own esteem, and was determined to win the day.

The sun having sunk some way towards the west, abundance of trees enabled him to pursue the best part of his route in the shade. This was so far fortunate that it took from him the additional chance of being attacked by some sudden fever, the result of combined anxiety and the fervour of a sun so fierce as that above him.

The breeze blew strongly over the glorious face of the waters, sparkling in the greatest freshness and transparency near the land, and melting into that exquisite thin blue tint where the horizon so gradually melts into sky, that the limit of either is scarcely to be detected.

Often did Ramsay pause with delight as some fresh beauty elicited his admiration; and, cooped up so long

as he had been within the narrow boundaries of a ship's sides, the feeling of desertion gave way to the pride and ectasy of freedom.

On arriving at the desired hill, he toiled up gradually to the summit, alternately halting to look round at the scenery, whose interest increased at every step, and then wending his way upward, leaning on his staff, and planning out schemes for the future, should a future be in store for him.

As soon as Ramsay had gained the summit of his proposed residence, he at once set up his staff; in other words, he laid down the burden he had hitherto carried, and frankly owned that the sight around was well worth four times the trouble he had taken to attain it.

Like the brow of some young Inca, the hill was crowned with feathery beauty. Three tall and magnificent palms grew on its very crest, shooting up at slight distances from each other, and in those varied yet consistent lines which convey to the mind at once so much of grandeur and of elegance. If his eyes were directed inland, undulation after undulation followed in sweeps of noble mass and breadth, composed of the brightest tints a forest can assume, broken every here and there by the lifting of some abrupt eminence or tor, whose yellow and purple sides, agreeing with the orange light of the afternoon sun, came forth in peculiar splendour.

The heavens were cloudless, and a delicious veil of transparent blue haze hung on the furthest landscape, and seduced the mind to wander over its seeming boundary, and roam, with all the strength of fancy, into the fair domain which was naturally supposed to lie beyond.

To seaward the boundless expanse lay as already described, and one only feature was wanting on either view; not to complete its beauty, that was already perfect; but to add to the charms it possessed for Ramsay, —the traces of his fellow-men. Solitude is congenial to all minds accustomed to exercise the powers of reflec-

tion; and the love of loneliness is, singularly enough, often allied to dispositions the most affectionate and kind. But there is a point beyond which, even the least gregarious, the most independent, might be unwilling to venture, however fond of enjoying the real delight and buoyant sense of freedom which occasional loneliness only can confer. We do not value this state of independence the less, from possessing always at hand the power to terminate it at pleasure; but the rapidly sinking sun reminded our hero that he must no longer neglect to prepare his place of refuge for the night.

Having carefully searched the hill, on both sides, for some natural hollow or indentation that might serve the end in view, he was almost on the point of giving it up in despair, when he found, partially hidden by the dead leaves of some parastical plant, much the sort of den that he had desired to discover.

This was situated not above fifty yards below the palm-trees, on the inland side of the hill, and nearly filled with brushwood.

As the speediest and least troublesome method of getting rid of the last, Ramsay returned to the palm-trees, turned out from his treasury that "crown of gold," his tinder-box, and striking a light, applied the fire, and the withered barriers opposing any entrance to his new and singular abode were soon in a blaze. As the brush-wood burnt, he cut off the remaining charred portions, and getting all into a heap, thus procured, ready for any emergency, a good fire.

When the hot breath of the devouring element had sufficiently cleared and purified the threshold of his subterraneous retreat, Ramsay knelt down, and proceeded very carefully to creep in, for the entrance was so low he could do little more.

A yard within the interior, the cave widened so that he could almost stand upright; but it possessed little or no depth, nor had it any lateral enlargements worth mentioning.

"Very decent sepulchre, on my word," said Ramsay, when he perceived how very slight could be the room to spare; but as quickly checking himself, added, "Let me be very thankful that I have this. I hope I am not trespassing on the ancient tenures of some of my future subjects; no nice little nest of scorpions to lay my head on—none of the beautiful quick-fanged cobras, to facilitate a sudden exit from this world, and put to shame every long ejectment the whole race of lawyers ever yet succeeded in."

The most careful inspection, however, of the walls of his tenement failed to confirm any suspicions of this kind.

To be sure, however, on this point, he collected all the dry fuel on which he could lay hands, and, cramming it into his cavern, applied a brand from the other fire. Not having the best of vents, the flame spread but slowly. The dry state of the combustibles soon, however, overcame all difficulties, and, satisfied that he had found out some shelter from the element, he now fresh fed the first heap of fire; and then, anxious to spare the slender stock of eatables that he had brought with him, he set out on a foraging expedition, with far less dread and fear of a result than was felt by the inimitable and immortal Balderstone in the land of plenty.

With that deliberation and method which smacked of auld Scotland even in the midst of the Atlantic, he first asked himself on what part of the creation he was going to make war—on which of his tenants he was about to distrain.

With a grasp of mind for which we hope his great extremity will plead, he readily resolved to take from all.

As the first step, he sought the shore, there to secure whatever of shell-fish the waves might have cast up. Anxious to accomplish his day's work before the sun finally sank beneath the wave, he hurried forth, club in hand, and soon gained the "Yellow beach." He had not rambled onward many steps by the margin of the sea, before he came to a large assemblage of shell-fish

of many sorts. At any rate, thought he, I am not doomed to be starved. But still they were nearly all of unknown shape and curious appearance, and at another time the very idea of feeding on them would have filled him with disgust. Now he carefully gathered them into a heap where the advancing tide could not sweep them away, and then, in hopes of finding some more familiar face, he proceeded again on his way.

There is something in this world which, occurring to all of us, at times assumes a shape so nearly to prophecy and prescience, as occasionally to stagger the very wildest sceptics on such points; and of this Ramsay now had proof. Having gathered together a few of that large class of shell-fish, the bivalves, which he knew would form at least a harmless food, a few steps further on brought him in sight of a large mass lying on the shore. It must be a rock, thought he—yet no, it moves—no surely—it cannot be such a lucky windfall. Now it is still—now it moves; and away he ran, as fast as his legs could carry him, to gain a personal inspection of that which had so strongly excited his curiosity.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Fear not to feast, for nature spreads the board!

Ramsay's speed soon brought him up with the object of his chase, and his joy was excessive when he found all his hopes confirmed by the possession of an immense turtle.

The last tide had left the poor creature basking in the sun, and in a few minutes more the present one would, in all probability, have reconveyed it to the bowers below, where, for ought we know, his mate was

delaying supper for him; an incident most plainly showing to all neglectful husbands, the impropriety of keeping their better halves waiting meals for them, while they are dawdling *hic et ubique;* in other words, at every club-house from Crockford's to the Parthenon —from the Parthenon to the Union.

However, if the turtle's mate were not keeping supper for him, some one else was, and mightily surprised did the unwieldly animal seem to be, when a rude hand was suddenly laid on one of his hind fins, and himself for ever dragged from the margin of those cool fresh waves, which, in a little further space, would have been flowing round him.

Ramsay having speedily pulled his prize some way up the beach, paused to consider how he should convey the same to his eyrie. The weight was so tremendous, that to carry it thither was out of the question; even to lift it was as much as his strength was equal to effect.

Meanwhile, to pursue his deliberations with more security, he turned his new friend most unhandsomely on his back—a piece of treachery for which nature having made no sort of provision that would enable the poor beast once more to right himself, thus it was obliged to remain.

While Ramsay was thus engaged, he happened to turn his eyes once more on the strand, and at a little further distance onwards he perceived what he thought like a second bird of the wave. Leaving his first prize, he dashed forward, came up with the suspicious object, and then found, as quartermaster Mustapha termed his caliphs and princes of eastern name—"another gentleman," half the size of the first. This induced him to make a still further examination; but no more appearing he lifted the second off the beach, and, despite all flappings of fins and attempts to fight, conveyed him to his brother in misfortune.

"I little thought to have found in such a spot *l'em-*

barras de richesse," said Ramsay; "but here, with very moderate economy, is food for at least a fortnight or three weeks; yet what am I to do with it? Even when I have invented some mode of cooking, if I do attack the whole at once, this hot climate must destroy the best half before it can be used. If I carry them to the mount, the same result will take place, after the second poor wretch has died a horrible death. They seem to be plentiful in this island; suppose I turn the smallest back into the sea? Will it, in my condition, be prudent to trust to future chances?—hardly. Then some middle course must be taken—your only true reconciler of difficulties.

Turning the smaller turtle on its back, as well as the fatter and larger one, Ramsay thus left them, and went to search for some natural basin or cavity in the neighbouring rocks, into which the water so flowed, yet never overflowing, that he might impound his prey with security, and yet where the animal's life would be preserved, as well as both its calipash and calipee, and yet the least possibility of suffering inflicted.

After some difficulty, a spot such as he sought was found; but it was clear that the waves would completely cover it at the highest point of the tide. This was not exactly all he desired, but in lieu of any thing better it was accepted. The question then was, how at high tide to prevent monsieur the turtle from making out to sea. Having hit on a plan which he conceived likely to answer, he returned for the smaller turtle, and bringing it down to the spot, drove his walking-stick firmly into a fissure of the rock; then taking off his neck-handkerchief, and knotting both the ends over one of the turtle's fins, he slipped the light noose in a clove hitch over the end of the stake. When this was drawn taut, the animal had but little room to play about, or endanger the security of its bonds by chafing them against the rocks. "At any rate," said he, smiling mournfully, "I need fear no poachers on my wide

domain;" and leaving the small turtle to his ingenious imprisonment, he returned to the other.

There my gentleman still lay floundering and flapping, like an alderman fanning himself on a July morning.

"Doubtless," soliloquised Ramsay, "if that fellow knows how heavy he is, he must be lying there laughing at me—a sort of old man of the sea; but I'll soon show him the dominion of man's power as well as appetite. Poor wretch! I'm sorry that fate forces me to it, but sith 'twill no better be, my most merciful part is to ease him of his life as speedily as possible, and, by letting him bleed to death here, I get rid of so much additional weight, and the chance of hurting the poor animal in its removal."

A single stroke of a sharp knife divided both jugular and carotid; and while the vital current flowed, Ramsay returned once more to the wood. Having cut a large strong bough, he interlaced the middle of it with several smaller cross branches, and then dragged it to where the fainting turtle was giving forth its last vital drops.

By the time that the creature was firmly secured to this new style of funeral car, it was beyond all further pain. But Herbert would have declared the best part of it was wasted; for the seamen with a taste one has little wish to comprehend, drink the blood of the turtle with avidity, esteeming it by far the choicest delicacy, and declaring its taste to be that precisely of new sweet milk.

Having placed the dead luxury, the flat side downwards, on his rustic drag, the hint of which Ramsay had borrowed from the use to which the beaver puts its tail, he put the large end of the bough over his left shoulder, and seizing it with both his hands, thus, in a manner comparatively easy, dragged Hector to the very gates o Troy.

Many a rude bump, however, did the poor deceased sustain in going, though Ramsay was as careful over him as possible, and the interlacing of cross boughs in

the middle prevented the rocks or stones from coming in actual contact with the shell. The cause of all this precaution we shall arrive at presently.

Some space necessarily elapsed before he reached his cave, and by that time the red orb of the sun was very nearly hidden below the horizon. Casting off his yoke, which had proved very fatiguing in the long ascent, he sat down to take a little rest, and consider how the grand result—the final goal of all, the cooking of the turtle—was yet to be effected.

The rich light of the sun, now in a horizontal line, shot over the land, and flung the deepening shadows of the latter along the sea, where the wind already began to freshen. Strange indeed that picture would have been deemed—the lonely officer perched on his hill, the sunlight striking like a gleam of fire on the dead turtle's back, and shooting away into the dark gloom that was gradually stealing over the beautiful scene of distant vale and mountain, all wooded to the highest point.

"Never did I think to set such value on an old black pot!" at last ejaculated our hero, after a long and meditative silence. Had I but that! yon fellow should soon make a mess fit for a king, the king of Lonelee Island—God help me! Well, I fear his majesty must do without a kettle, as well as many other matters far more desirable. And which will be the best way? To broil him would be wasteful; to boil him impossible. Neither do we possess the enviable stoicism of some monarchs, to dispense with all operations of the sort. Could I not light a fire under his huge shell, and so stew him in his own sauce, as the popular saying is in the world I have left? But then will not the shell so crackle and burn with the heat as to impart not the very purest flavour to the soup? No, I think I have it!"

Once more rising, Ramsay trotted down the hill till he came to a kind of morass he had observed in passing over with his prize. On examining this more narrowly,

he found, as he had hoped, an excellent spring. After quenching his thirst, he dug out from the channel of the water a quantity of the earth or mud over which it flowed, and found little difficulty in kneading this into a kind of clay; then gathering as large a quantity as he could well carry, after he had stamped it firmly together, he bore it on his shoulder to his den.

With this he again kneaded in the leaves stripped from the sledge boughs, which gave the clay a greater degree of tenacity one part with another; and finally with this compost he entirely covered the turtle, previously cutting off the head and fins, and leaving a small hole at the neck.

When the traverser of the deep was completely clothed in this aluminous coating, Ramsay took two large square-shaped stones, placed them on their edges at the distance of a foot apart, and five feet distant from the entrance to his cave, directly in front. On the edge of each stone he fixed a pat of clay; and resting on these pillars, as it were, he put the embedded turtle, which, with its back down, was supported firmly enough.

Nothing now remained but to light a fire under and round the gentleman; which was soon done, and the blaze once kindled, Ramsay continued piling on fuel till at last the turtle was completely covered with the brands, and these extended in a semicircle round to each side of the cave, forming a very effectual cordon against any of his unknown subjects who might otherwise make of him that which he hoped to make of his turtle—some substantial meals.

While this royal blaze burnt round his territory, he marched unhurt within the flaming circle, which the steady blast of the sea-breeze blew gently inland, and taking, at the same time, in his hand the bundle of his shipmates' jackets and trousers, first strewed the earth inside with leaves, and over these disposed his slender stock of clothes in the best order that he could contrive.

A briliant light was of course thrown into his retreat

from the fire, so that, considering the means at his disposal, he was able to arrange his novel kind of cabin entirely to his satisfaction.

The reader will remember that he had already lit a bonfire within it, and the still warm ashes remaining underneath the boughs now laid down were, in a slight degree, a guard against the damp.

A large heap of unused fuel remained close at hand to answer any demand through the night, and having looked at his pistol-priming and flints, he had recourse to the steward's basket for his supper. At this meal the only article not most niggardly guarded was the water; for throughout the day he had been suffering considerably from thirst, and the discovery of the little spring at the foot of his hill produced a feeling of joy which could only be paralleled in any of our minds by the sudden discovery of a lead, a copper, or a coal mine. The supper terminated, he heaped fresh fuel on his encircling line of fire: and thankful beyond all utterance for the reprieve he had received from the most horrible of deaths, he lay down to enjoy in his dreams the pleasure of seeing one from whom he had too great reason to fear that he was for ever separated.

CHAPTER XXXII.

> And beauty, still with danger hand in hand,
> Roams o'er the wilds of this enchanted land.

THE morning had some time dawned when Ramsay awoke from his long and delicious sleep. Hand in hand with her to whom his heart was given, fancy had kindly led him in his slumbers through the beautiful woods and mountains which surround Loch Ard, once so familiar to him in his childhood. A thousand beautiful streams seemed slowly trickling to the loch, along meadows that emerald might be proud to resemble, or falling over the abrupt face of some many-tinted cliff, or seen glittering

like some silvery snake among the groves of young oak, larch, and birch, or leaping from rock to rock, as it rushed from those lofty mountains, whose tops obscured it from the mists of heaven, or spanning with the bright and glorious arch of the cataract the romantic rocks of Lydard. The whole scene came before him as freshly as if no long years of sorrow had intervened since his last beholding it.

Eagerly, and with all the fever of the raging thirst that still remained upon him, he stooped beside a clear pool to drink, but the treacherous and limpid element shrank away, mocking the parched lips that sought its refreshing draught, though the hand that he most prized seemed to sprinkle its cooling drops upon his forehead.

Still it was a blessed vision, and when the overpowering sensations of drought at length aroused him to the truth of his position, he resisted the burning craving for water that consumed him, and closing his too willing lids, endeavoured to coax back the dear but delusive dream once more.

But the thread was lost—the spell was broken. Once he was on the point of dropping off to sleep, when the sound of her voice, plain, distinct, and melodious as he had ever heard it in former days, called aloud his name. Pale, anxious, agitated, he started up—for the moment expecting to see her before him.

Eagerly he listened for a repetition of the well-remembered sound; but nothing fell upon his ear but the loud tumultuous beating of his heart, as it throbbed within a bosom that seemed scarcely able to restrain its violence.

Starting to his feet, he sprang out upon the hill. Nothing like a human being was to be seen. Nature, like a young bride robed in white, lay in her brightest lights before him. The sun rose over the eastern sea with a glory and a splendour to which no power save that of vision could do justice. Everything seemed as still as when the first Sabbath shed its hallowing rays on the

creation. The voice of the distant forest alone broke the exquisite quiet of the hour, and raised a hymn of praise and harmony to heaven.

Not even the mighty power of love could long convulse the bosom of the lonely beholder. The beauty of the view, the solemn peace of this bright dayspring, conveyed comfort to a mind that had none other to cheer or solace it save the voice of nature; and as poor Ramsay gazed around, he acknowledged that fancy had only put upon him one more cheat, which affection had been too ready to welcome.

Arming himself with his pistol and hatchet, he cut a fresh walking-staff, and took his way down to the beach, to discover some spot where he might enjoy the immediate pleasures of the bath, without those of a shark's teeth in reversion.

Engaged in this attempt, he passed the spot where, still safely secured by the fin, lay his smaller turtle; but still nothing could he find that answered exactly to the end he had in view. The scenery around him, however, was wild and attractive in the extreme; and lost in admiration of this, on he wandered, utterly forgetful of that for which he sought, and busy only in contemplating the bold forms of broken rock around him. At last, on turning a projecting point left dry by the sea, he came to a small bay, the sands of which were varied by long streaks of rock covered with dark seaweed; from amongst these rose up four or five gigantic and perpendicular masses of many grotesque shapes. In former times they had evidently been part of the mainland, but some convulsion having caused a sudden fall of the impending cliff, the looser parts of it had been washed away, and these monarchs of the spot remained alone to brave the fury of the tempest and the gale. One was like a vast sugar-loaf, another like the letter L, and a third like that of I—resembling somewhat crooked pillars.

Between the bases of these two last, sank down a very

singular chasm. It was of an irregular square form: around it the rocks, covered with seawead, spread out in a rough but level plain, while the square chasm itself sank down fifteen, and in many places twenty feet deep, being some forty feet long at its greatest length, and perhaps as much as thirty at its greatest breadth.

Being thus much below the level of the sea, it naturally remained at all times filled with water, which, from being so overshadowed, was clear and pellucid to the last degree. Every tint of the many weeds and stones below, rose through its crystal waters, the mirror-like repose of which not the slightest ripple disturbed. It was a bath for an emperor, and the moment Ramsay beheld it, he stripped himself of his jacket to prepare for the pleasure in store.

At this moment, in the deep stillness of the place and hour, he thought he detected the sound of falling water, and imagining that his dream must still be haunting him, he turned round to confirm the belief. The contrary, however, was the result, for, at the distance of half a mile under the rocks, he beheld a noble cascade falling from a height of eighty feet.

The confluence of the small hills above formed a little valley, through which a brook pursued its unseen course, till, gaining the edge of the precipice, it there precipitated itself in sudden grandeur on the sea or rocks below, according to the state of the tide.

At present the water dashed upon the hard red stone, and the sight and sound of so much fresh water—seemingly the very realisation of his past visions—excited in Ramsay such a fresh accession of that thirst he had vainly attempted to allay in passing over his spring, that he at once determined to prefer a shower to a plunge bath.

Replacing his jacket, he turned to depart, and in so doing struck with his foot a large stone, which, rolling over and over, at length splashed sullenly into the dark chasm at his feet.

Scarcely had the first hollow sound reverberated over its pellucid surface, when forth darted from the hiding-place of the shelving rock beneath him, a long gray object, as if to seize the falling stone. Ramsay looked again, and the sudden emotion of horror that scrutiny excited, almost caused him to lose his hold and slip in also. The creature, disappointed in its prey, rose to the surface, and there, in all the frightful and pitiless maliginity that distinguishes its head as well as character, our hero beheld a young ground-shark, the most voracious of their detested species, and from whose fatal jaws the merest trifle had rescued those limbs that now stood palpitating at the bare sight of the monster.

Had he once jumped into the beautiful but treacherous pool, his fate had been sealed. From its rugged edges it would at no time have been an easy matter to get out; and in this case, with the animal waiting and watching for its prey to plunge, Ramsay, before he could have regained the surface, would have been a dead man.

The fish was about twelve feet long, and had clearly been imprisoned by the tide, or else this was a favourite haunt where it lay in wait for such prey as accident threw into its power. Having gazed at the wretch till it once more ensconced itself in a hiding spot, Ramsay, thankful for his deliverance, turned away.

Such was the effect produced upon him by this incident, that the pleasure of his bath was spoiled. He could scarcely divest himself of the feeling, that even under the fresh water cataract he might lay his account for a few young crocodiles, alligators, or other interesting specimens of the animal creation, coming down on his defenceless head—to say nothing of half a score tons of disengaged stones. But he would not allow himself to be bullied from his object by these idle phantoms of the brain; but resolutely persisting in his determination, had no sooner leaped under the rapid fall, and felt its cool refreshing weight of waters come tumbling on his bare shoulders, than he forgot the young ground-shark

in the delight of his magnificent shower-bath, and the somewhat difficult task of keeping his feet under such a power of water. The attempt to drink he certainly made, but did not repeat, for it seemed too like swallowing the falls of Niagara. A few minutes of this, however, sufficed his utmost wants, and with every nerve fresh braced he returned homewards.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

From the mountains all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.—Cowper.

The shark is the natural and most detested enemy of the sailor, between which two there exists no sort of chivalry. With an indescribable longing to destroy the wretch, Ramsay endeavoured to pass by the spot where the monster, lying in wait, had so nearly settled all his troubles. But, unable to resist the opportunity, he turned back to kill it if possible.

Taking out his pistol, and seeing that the flint and priming were in good condition, he took up his former station by the edge of the pool, that the fish below might both hear and see him; then having cocked his pistol, he kicked into the water a second stone.

Faithful to its most cunning instinct, forth darted the shark, and as it found itself balked a second time, turned its small sinister eye on its tormentor, with the louring glance of disappointed ferocity. Ramsay waited till the creature's head rose within an inch almost of the surface. —Unheedingly the fierce animal permitted him to take a steady aim. Forth flashed the pistol, and as its sharp echoes reverberated a thousand times among the rocks, the shriek of the wounded fish was audible.

The pool, which an instant before was of the same clear blue tint as the sky above, was now discoloured with the dark flood that shot forth in a deep crimson spurt from the shark's forehead, lashed too into the

most tumultuous pink foam by the convulsive whippings of its powerful tail—now curving in idle wrath above the waves it created—now darting down to the bottom, now glancing round and round the rocky sides, in the vain and furious effort to find a channel of escape—now attempting the part for which nature, kind to other classes of the creation, had never fitted it, of leaping out of the rocky basin in which it was imprisoned—striking its already wounded head at every turn, and dyeing at every moment more and more ruddily the before crystal waters of its sea lair.

All was in vain: Ramsay, confident that he had given it a mortal wound, waited calmly by the brink of the pool, watching its maddened throes and idle rage; now losing it in the troubled volumes of gore-stained water—now seeing it rise with impotent rage and despair at his feet.

The wound was small, nor did it seem greatly to have injured any vital part; but it must have divided some large blood-vessel, for the hæmorrhage ceased not; and, promoted by the excessive motion of the animal, in half an hour had so drained the body of its vital stream, that it lay nearly still upon the surface, betraying life only by the play of its fins, which prevented its back from turning downwards, and an occasional plunge and struggle which lessened in its duration at every effort.

That muscular power over the air bladder, which is necessary to allow of a fish keeping the bottom, was already gone—the dark current slowly trickled from the inner angle of the right eye, where the ball had entered, and Ramsay beheld its red stream gradually sinking through the less dense medium of the salt water, until a sudden throe of the fish mingled them indistinguishably together.

In a little while these struggles were over, the fins gradually ceased moving, the body turned slowly over, and the morning sun played on the white breast of

the lifeless shark, on which still washed the ensanguined waves, through which had been diffused the life-blood so lately animating it.

"Man shall never make part of thy food more," said Ramsay, looking exultingly on his victory. "A charge of powder—I have known the day I would have given a thousand charges of powder for such a scene; and now I think of it, thou wilt be worth at least three to me—even here. What shall not a sailor's ingenuity turn to account? Thy jaws shall make me three or four small saws at least; thy hide will I turn to shoes; thy small bones to bradalls, or sail-needles, or arrow-heads, and the large ones will I pave my cave with. Philistine that thou art, out of thy flesh will I make oil. A charge of powder thrown away—no, rather with a charge of powder have I bought here a fortune. But I lose time, and in comes the tide. The triumph will be incomplete, unless I get the thief out of his element to mine. What goodly acres would I not give for a few fathom of inch-and-a-half rope! but what shall I do in the absence of it? That cur is gradually drifting towards the brink—so much the better. Laws of attraction, I thank thee. A goodly bough now, with a crook at the end of it, stuck through his mouth and gills, might enable me to drag him to the land; and so first, then, that will I do."

Away ran Ramsay back to the nearest point of the wood.

Fortunately for the success of his wishes, he was saved the trouble of going so far, for encountering a heap of rubbish thrown up by the sea, he discovered amidst it the best part of a young tree, which bore every appearance of having been blown from its bed, and washed by the sea till denuded of its bark, and its wood saturated with water, and hardened to a point that almost defied cutting.

Dragging this valuable out from the variety of sea-weed, shells, pebbles, &c., gathered round it, forth came

his faithful hatchet, and off went every bough, except the thicker part of the last—a good strong fellow—which he took care to leave for the formation of a crook.

With a joy that tamer bosoms can never feel, and which those only who delight in the subduing of difficulties can taste in its full strength, our hero bounded over rock and water till he came to the shark's pool. As he had concluded, the dead fish now floated close to the brink; the sapling he bore on his shoulder was at least eleven feet long, and the crook at the end did most essential service in bringing him to the rocks. An ascent of a foot was now, however, to be overcome; and after a little search our hero found a small channel through which the water flowed, till it reached its present level. Here he had to drag the creature over only a few inches, and this, to half the unresisting shark's length, was, with a little difficulty, accomplished. There, however, the prince of many teeth stuck fast. The tide was, meanwhile, flowing in rapidly, and if Ramsay made not every haste with his victim, he was apprehensive that his brother myrmidons of the deep might crowd to rescue or to eat—for it mattered not much to their affection which—the body of this Patroclus of the seas.

Decisive steps alone could insure success. Out came his hatchet again and he began to deal some most dividing blows on the middle of the wretch's back. Dead as he appeared to be, three or four convulsive writhes of the tail, and a gasp of the jaws, that nearly severed his drag-pole, accompanied, but did not prevent, this operation.

The carcass severed, so as to give the largest portion with the head, the rest was left partly landed; and placing his pole once more over his left shoulder, Ramsay soon saw the head portion upon the bay, beyond the reach of the tide, and clearing the jaw to extricate the hook, hurried back to the remaining por-

tion. This was not so easily fastened, until a hole had been cut for the crook to entangle itself in the spine, and then away dashed the victor with his trophy behind him—splash—splash—through wave, and over rock—until both parts of his late conquest graced the sands.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

. . . . For there are minds
The desert cannot conquer, nor the crowd corrupt.

"Now, my boy," said Ramsay, exultingly, as he gazed on the severed portions, "you may safely lie there for a while, and after breakfast you'll form a good day's work in the comparative anatomy line. Were it not for one thought—one wish—one remembrance that cannot be banished—how infinitely more of happiness does this solitary life promise, than the horrid one from which my tyrant turned me, as he intended, so revengefully! I have no books—alas! too true; but it will be my own fault if I now want employment; and I thank heaven that gave me a mind to be happy in the pursuit of any innocent occupation."

With a lightness of spirit that surprised himself, he already felt that the great majority of his anticipated woes had vanished; and, as he viewed the sea and sky, which bore many signs of the bad weather prevalent at no great distance, he mused on the present course of his late frigate, and the feeling that might have been produced on board by the treatment exhibited towards himself.

Having gained his cave, refilled his water-bottle, and set out his simple breakfast array, he removed the embers from the mighty heap of turtle. As he had anticipated, the ashes, on being disturbed, still fanned

into fire at the fresh morning breeze; and the clay, now rendered quite hard, was nearly at a red heat.

Uncovering the surface, therefore, he proceeded with his hatchet to make an opening on the flat or under part of the turtle, and the marl, being there less acted upon by the fire, cracked off without much difficulty.

The shell, from the heat, had risen and softened considerably. This, therefore, yielded to his hatchet with ease; and before him smoked a turtle pasty, that would have delighted the curiosity as well as gastronomy of an alderman of Portsoken.

The gentle and gradual manner in which the warmth had been applied effectually dressed the fish without overdoing it. True it was, Ramsay wanted the sauces that are turned to such account by Birch; and the pine-apples that grew on his island had not yet come to pay court to their new sovereign, so he had no pine-apple punch: but he had not forgotten to bring up a small conch shell full of salt water; the unripe tamarind added its delicious acid; and his morning ramble had discovered to him the scarlet and potent capsicum; —so that the mess thus tendered to an appetite, ravenous as a Russian's, appeared to Ramsay to be the most exquisite meal of which he had ever yet partaken.

As yet, he had not been fortunate enough to discover any wild yams, or other class of root approaching to them, as likely to serve the purpose of bread. The quantity of this article even now in his possession was but small; every particle that he consumed was with regret, and the sooner he found out some substitute for wheat, the more readily he should add to his wealth. Having removed the remainder of the turtle within the shadow of his cave, and replaced the cover of shell before removed, he set out for his friend the shark, and dragging the last under the shadow of the impending rocks, soon stripped the skeleton bare. The bones he washed well in water, and then left exposed to the sun to bleach: the flesh he piled together, till he could

hit on some method of extracting the oil which it contained.

The want of a caldron next presented itself, and, incited by his success with the turtle, he determined to mould one in clay, and bake it in the fire. The carrying into effect these resolutions occupied him till ten o'clock, when the rapidly increasing heat of the sun obliged him to return for a siesta to his cave.

Fatigue soon induced sleep; and after an hour thus spent, he awoke, and found the sky heavily overclouded, and the wind whistling at a most mournful rate around him. A storm was evidently raging in his neighbourhood; but with this he had nothing to do—not he: the lodger aroused by the report of fire was not more indifferent.

Taking advantage of the cool air, he reloaded his pistol, and set out on a tour of discovery, to find, if possible, some root of the yam tribe. No longer depressed, and almost indifferent whether or not life was to be continued to him, he now experienced that buoyancy of spirit which the anticipation of adventure ever confers.

The more he saw of the spot on which he had been cast, the more did its many beauties gain upon his heart; and even at that early period he foresaw that the hour of leaving them for ever, should such occur, would not be one of unmixed pleasure.

For many hours his search remained unsuccessful; but as he was about to return home, he turned up with a wooden spade, which he had cut for the purpose, a root of the very class he sought—poor, indeed, and not free from a bitter taste of turpentine, yet such as would nevertheless greatly improve on cultivation.

Gathering as many of these as he could bear, he attempted to return by a different route.

The more immediate result of this piece of daring, was the fact of his loosing his path altogether. In seeking to regain it, however, he stumbled on a small

orange grove, an acquisition which far more than compensated him for the trouble imposed by the additional wandering.

Thirsty and fatigued by his walk, the fresh and golden fruits were hailed as gifts of Heaven; and taking away a nosegay of the delicious flowers, he left so broad a trail by breaking the branches of the trees as he passed, that he could not well fail to recover the spot.

This day, thought he, has added more than one acquisition to my stock; for, by the blessing of perseverance, I trust ere long to get out of that orange grove a few pitchers of wine; for if my kettle turns out durable at all, I may well laugh at barrels. All I want now is a companion—but, alas! that may not be.

Arranging his various burdens, he commenced his return, and arrived at the cave an hour before sundown. The fire which, at starting, Ramsay had lighted, to bake his clay crucible, was now reduced to a mere heap of ashes: still burning brightly, it is true, for, large as was the heap of fuel it had consumed, the wind crept in such powerful gusts round the lee side of the hill, that as fast as the wood calcined into dust, it was swept away.

Ramsay's first care was to replenish his store of firewood. This supplied, the bowl of turtle was once more placed upon the embers for his supper.

CHAPTER XXXV.

No treasure on the earth,
No gem within the mine,
Nor form in Heaven's host,
So dear to me as thine.

Still the gale blew furiously. The sun, mantled from all sight, remained hidden beneath a mass of dark threatening clouds, as unusual in that fine but fervid climate as it was dangerous—at least to those upon the sea.

But however tumultuous the course of life might be afloat, on the shore its current flowed equably enough for the mildest-tempered hermit. Waking at daylight, Ramsay ascended the summit of his hill; but nothing could he descern upon the vast circumference of the sea, save its dark billows, torn and agitated by the tempest sweeping over it.

The palm trees that crowned the hill so beautifully, and rendered it a landmark for a considerable distance round, bent and quivered to the blast, as if they intended to kiss their mother earth; and lonely as was the spot, Ramsay felt it was one almost as pleasant as the sea in such weather. His shower-bath for this morning he he dispensed with; but having uncovered his clay kettle, and finding that lt was not cracked, he descended to the beach, and bringing up the remains of the shark's flesh, commenced extracting the oil from it. The bones he then again washed fully, and left exposed. In passing along the beach, he took a look at his small turtle, which, though tied by the fin, and still fast as adamant, showed, by the liveliness of its eye, its untouched state of health, and perfect unconsciousness of the martyrdom at hand.

Our hero now set about building for himself a more commodious residence, which was to include the cave at the back, and circle out before it in the shape of a bow; the floor to be raised with a double layer of stone, some two feet above the ground, with a most ample fire-place. The light was to be admitted through narrow gothic slips, and the entrance to be, like that of a ship, from the roof. These were the main particulars of the plan he had in his own mind adopted.

In this wise employment of his time, and unflinching battle against ennui and melancholy, Ramsay passed several succeeding days. One evening, however, during the continuance of the gale, as he slept within the circle of fire that shot its purple gleams along the air, on the sudden blasts of the storm passing over it, the broken

officer started every now and then from his rude couch —lay down—slept for a few seconds, and then started up again.

"Surely," said he, musingly, "those *were* guns which I heard, and yet I cannot catch the same sounds when I sit up. Now I hear nothing but the roaring of the gale." Again he had laid his head upon his poor apology for a pillow; but scarcely were his eyes closed, when the same low fitful thunder once more banished sleep.

"Well, I can bear this no longer!" said he, rising; and taking his arms, and stepping over the embers of his fire, he sought the palm-trees on the summit.

But the utmost vigilance and scrutiny enabled him to detect nothing that either confirmed or negatived his former belief. The most intense effort at hearing revealed nothing more than the howling and whistling of the night wind, as, in all its strength and fury, it poured upon the face of the waters.

Once, it is true, when looking to windward, something like the sudden and intermitting flash of battle seemed to glance on his wearied eye—but was not caught again. On flew the gale,—on rolled the mighty waters of the deep. Broad gleaming lines of white were seen dashing across the dark blue bosom of the afflicted sea—a moment seen, a moment lost;—but that faint illusion of the distant horizon that bespoke the contest of the elements rather than of man, was not again discernible by his overstrained vision.

"It must be fancy, after all," said he; "yet I could have sworn—ha! there I hear it again—yet nothing is to be seen. Well, I will be cheated no more;" and resolutely shutting his senses against all such further vague and exciting evidence, he returned to his cave, and soon feel fast asleep.

The next day the gale still continued, though in a less degree; but, on the second ensuing morning, the sun was high when he awoke. The wind had greatly abated, and thinking no more of the former night's alarm, and

not feeling inclined to expose himself to the direct rays of the sun, noon had considerably passed when he left the cave.

He had walked perhaps half a mile to leeward of his hill, when his path going at the head of one of those beautiful and suddenly deep creeks in the rocky shore which I have already mentioned, his eye was arrested by the sight of something peering above the surrounding trees.

"What can that be?" thought he, as he suddenly halted. "Devilish funny!—had I seen that anywhere but here, I should have guessed it to belong to something else than the stump of a tree that must have been broken off in the gale:"—and, without further thought, on he passed.

A sudden turning of his tangled road brought him in full view of the head of the creek. Did he see rightly? What was the meaning of such a sight? Surely it could not be!—and yet it was—the battered and wrecked hull of a noble frigate!

The blood throbbed tumultuously through Ramsay's heart. Seldom if ever in life had he experienced so sudden a shock as that which the sight of that frigate conveyed. The remains of her broken bowsprit projected over the shore, among the underwood that shadowed the creek in which she lay. The mizen-mast alone was standing; and that, shot away just beneath the cheeks, presented the appearance which Ramsay had mistaken for a shattered tree. The gale and sea combined had thrown her where she lay, firmly wedged beyond all power of further shifting: while the entrance, or what had once been the entrance, to her quarter-deck, was not a hundred yards from the spot where, still lost in amazement and surprise, Ramsay yet lingered.

Hope had so strongly risen within him at the sight of a man-of-war, that, motionless as she lay, without sign of life on board, he would not, for an instant, permit himself to believe, that he was thus to have snatched

from within his very reach the blessing of some being like himself with whom to exchange ideas.

Trembling with the intensity of his feelings, he paused for a few moments, in eager expectation of beholding some of her crew on deck—none came; for the voices of those below—none were heard. The noise of some imprisoned animal alone made itself heard; and with the increasing fear that this was merely a consistent waif thrown up on his unpeopled sovereignty, he, with melancholy and foreboding step, began to descend.

Yet, surely, there was a group of sailors sleeping on the weather-side of the quarter-deck: after the dreadful fatigues of the storm, slumber had overpowered watching, and they recruited themselves for the encounter of fresh sorrows. He approached a few steps nearer. The group were sleeping—but it was the sleep of death. Strange marks, and streams of blood seemed to have trickled down from the spot where they were lying, while the planks were covered with bloody footprints, and long broad streaks in the same revolting torrent, as if, wounded and dying, they had crept towards each other solely with the purpose of expiring.

A closer inspection showed her boats, booms, and masts, her decks, the remnants of her bulwarks, her capstan, and gun-carriages, all ploughed up with the unsparing shot; and the wreck before him was doubtless the combined effect of the elements and man.

Disappointed, sick at heart, and angry with himself for having nourished hopes that were not to be realised, he turned on his heel. There is little use, thought he, in subjecting oneself to unnecessary horrors. To morrow, when I get a little reconciled to this sudden and second downfal of my hopes, I will go aboard, and see what I can turn to use. And yet," added he, hesitating, after he had walked a few yards back, "if I am right in my conjectures, there may at least be one wounded and deserted man whom, if I may not rescue, I may greatly relieve for the time; and though it is a horrid

sight to wade through in cold blood I ought not to do less."

These thoughts induced an alteration of his former view, and he stepped on board. If his horror had been raised at a distance, how much more powerfully was it now excited! Wherever he turned—ruin, distress, misery of every form, animate and inanimate, met his eye. The decks were strewed with corpses, and many of them frightfully mangled, while the whole appeared most singularly to have experienced the last parting of breath while in the act of dragging their wounded frames to the quarter-deck. Some still had life sufficient to turn a dull and glaring eye on the only whole or living creature that moved amongst them; and Ramsay, too well experienced in the pains of a battle-field to misinterpret their piteous looks, got fresh water from the still whole water-butt, and poured it over lips unable to ask for it; and from which the angel of life, in more cases than one, took his departure as soon as the burning, parching thirst of approaching death had been allayed.

Human speech heard he none: those who were the least exhausted, were only able to articulate a faint groan, and that seemed to be the sole explanation he was likely to receive of the shocking scene around

CHAPTER XXXVI.

> Where grows the vine, whose purple fruit can yield,
> Drops sweet as water on the battle-field?

Having given to all within his reach who showed any signs of life those drops of water—then more precious than all the world's wealth beside—Ramsay, with a faint hope of finding below some beings more within the scope of his assistance, descended to the lower deck.

The same marks of horror and despair were visible at every step he took. On the main-deck there were

fewer corses, and these drenched in salt-water, and lying amid the wreck of guns; while of the wounded he saw none. On the lower-deck, also, there appeared a total absence of the latter, but the dead were trebled.

The fighting screens were rent, torn, and disfigured in every way, and still hung in tatters around the hatchways; the beams of day were in a great degree excluded, and the horrors of the scene thus increased by the want of light and air, and the effluvia consequent on the state of the ship.

Carefully Ramsay looked around for some one whom he might yet snatch from the jaws of the grave—but none were to be found. Of the thirty or forty bodies encumbering that deck, one or two alone showed any symptoms of remaining life, and these were almost senseless and irretrievable.

He next proceeded to look into the officers' cabins. The master was stretched out on his cot, with a frightful wound in the head, and from the low stertorous breathing, as life drew near its close, shewed that the brain had been severely injured. One of the lieutenants also exhibited the remains of existence, but it was the remains only, for as Ramsay gave him a little water and some spirit, which he had found in the gun-room, a sob in the throat as the fluid was rejected, told him that his efforts were in vain, and the sufferer's sorrows over.

Determined, since he had begun, to go through with his melancholy search, he opened the next door.

Starting back like one whose over-excited mind beholds some supernatural visitation, he paused in wonder, fear, and disbelief, and then rushed madly forward. What was it that he beheld?—What could that cabin contain more dreadful, more surprising, more sadly interesting, than the sight which greeted him at every step through that unhappy ship?

Upon the fixed bed-place lay the body of a young man. A shot had struck him on the right arm and shoulder; the limb was still laid out in splints and

bandages. The clothes on which he lay—the bed-place—the deck—were all covered and flooded with his blood. But it was not on this dead evidence of the combat that Ramsay's eye rested. The evening sun struck powerfully on the bull's eye that lit the cabin from the ship's side, and fell on the left hand of the dead officer, which, extended to the edge of his couch, was grasped in those of a lady, who appeared to have died in the very act of pressing it to her lips. With an agitation greater than any he had yet experienced, Ramsay lifted the fair head from its mournful pillow. All his fears—all his hopes, were confirmed,—for the gentle being whom he had thus found and now supported, was indeed Angela Livingstone! and the officer for whom she mourned, her brother.

Who can depict the feelings of Ramsay at this discovery? For the first time, under all his misfortunes, he gave way to despair. She for whom he had borne, suffered, endured, so much,—was she—could she, indeed, be lost to him?

The coldness of her hands and face struck like ice to his heart. Kneeling by her side, and imploring the insensible girl, by every term of endearment and affection, to speak to him, he, for the first time, believed that the most bitter portion of his life was yet in store for him.

But deep as was his agony, he did not so far sink beneath it, as to neglect trying every remedy by which the scarcely faded spark of existence might yet be renewed. Lifting the deceased lieutenant from his berth, which could afford neither comfort nor service to the dead, he reversed the mattress, in hopes that the blood had not soaked through. In this, however, he was disappointed; but in the next cabin, which had been the purser's, the bedding had not been used.

The captain, who, it would seem, had been killed at one blow of a splinter, having been laid out on the floor of the place, had remained undisturbed. To remove

the poor officer from within to the gunroom, and lay Angela gently on the vacant couch, was the work of a few minutes; and then moistening the pallid lips with wine, and chafing the temples and heart, he had the happiness of seeing life gradually return. The first sign of this was a faint though involuntary attempt made to swallow; and then, from a state so near the grave that the boundary line was not to be distinguished, pulsation began once more to be perceptible.

Covering up his beloved and tender patient with all the dry clothes he could procure, he hastened to the galley, and having contrived to kindle a fire, he heated a couple of iron shot and some water. As soon as the former were sufficiently warm, he wrapped them in an old jacket, and placing them at Miss Livingstone's feet, had the delight of finding her in an easy and profound slumber.

Ignorant as he was of all the causes which contributed to the result around him, he felt sure that there could be nothing of which she stood so much in need, or which in time would so tranquillize her mind as sleep, and strengthen it to sustain the surprise of seeing one so little expected as himself.

Leaving her, therefore, to the full enjoyment of this repose, he addressed himself to the melancholy task of collecting and burying the dead before they advanced to such a state of decay as to render this impossible. The gunroom was first to be cleared, and lashing the unhappy sailors in pairs with some shot, he thus launched them overboard.

When this task was discharged, he found that only two human beings were alive on board, beside Miss Livingstone and himself. But of neither of these cases could the least hopes be entertained, from the severity of their wounds, and the manner in which their wants had been neglected. Musing a while on the mystery which seemed to wrap up the dark history that had so terminated, he hastily washed down the main and quar-

decks, as far as a plentiful application of water would do so; and bringing from the shore a quantity of dry sand, sprinkled it entirely over those parts of the lower-deck where the sanguine current of life had so lavishly flowed: opening, at the same time, all the bulls'-eyes*, and hoisting a couple of windsails to admit the air.

The marks of the fight being thus to a great and the most offensive degree, obliterated, one only body of the many dead remained unburied—that of his former enemy, Lieutenant Livingstone. Thinking it possible that his sister might be better pleased to be satisfied of his death by once more looking on the remains of her brother, Ramsay laid him on the forecastle, and threw an ensign over the grating.

He next arranged all that would be immediately wanted, and cleared out one of the best remaining cabins in the gunroom for his own accommodation. While engaged in so doing, a deep sob from the cabin of Miss Livingstone drew him to her side.

Awaking from her sleep, memory had recalled her to the scenes through which she had so lately passed, and which she imagined still to surround her. When, after a previous tap for permission, she beheld her cabin-door slowly open, and the image of one appear before her, who, waking or sleeping, had for long months scarcely ever been absent from her thoughts, the belief that she was still dreaming so completely possessed her mind, that, unwilling to lose the dear delusion, she once more closed her eyes, murmuring in faint but thrilling tones of affection the name that rose too readily to her lips.

Ramsay replied not, but the fervid clasp that folded her to his bosom was more eloquent than words.

* "Bull's-eye," a very small circular window in a ship's side, fitted with a thick half sphere of glass.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Theirs was the home that Hope and Fancy rear
By the bright shores of summer's choicest isles.

After the first excitement and agitation of their meeting had passed, the conversation of the lovers was but a series of inquiries as to all that had mutually happened to each other since they last parted.

Nothing could exceed Angela's horror, when she learnt that it was her father whose ingenious cruelty had condemned Ramsay to a desert island; and strangely singular to each of them appeared that destiny which, laughing at man's blind efforts to escape the future, made his very struggles, in so doing, conducive to the very doom they wished to avert.

When, in turn, Ramsay alluded to his having discovered Lieutenant Livingstone on board, Angela, bursting into tears afresh, told him that the ship had been engaged for many hours—that her brother had been severely wounded and died in her arms.

The thoughts of her loneliness here recurred to her, but their bitterness was smoothed away by the reflection that one still dearer was restored to her, and gratitude reproved those tears which memory had provoked. As her mind recurred to Ramsay's sufferings since they had separated, the outrages practised upon him, and his present position, anger—pity—grief—love, in turns possessed her bosom—each to each succeeding—and the last, the mighty victor, remained master of the field.

Little to them was the world that had flitted from their grasp—the possessions they had lost—the treacherous friends that the course of events had unmasked. Their mutual companionship would be a world, beyond whose boundaries they had not a wish to roam.

The simple gifts of nature sufficed for life, and, their affection made an enjoyment of itself; neither could they mourn for friends, who had only hitherto experienced the evils resulting from them in times past, and

for those to come they were still contented to be everything to each other.

If Ramsay's ingenuity, courage, and industry had been unwearied hitherto, when he had little or no motive for their exertion beyond the mere reluctance to incur death by starvation, it may readily be imagined what a spur was now added to his determination and activity.

With all the materials, tools, and appliances afforded by the frigate, his future labours were rendered comparatively light. Under ordinary circumstances, he would have wished to establish his quarters on board the ship, but this he found, on the second day, insupportable.

With the utmost care and cleanliness, a ship after action is a grievous trial to the olfactory organs, and now, when want of hands rendered the two former impossible, Ramsay found that the consideration of health alone must force him to the shore, and build a cottage.

To the situation of the cave Angela objected strongly, on account of the exposed aspect. Its distance from the frigate seconded her arguments in the mind of Ramsay, and his second attempt at building was commenced, still on a rising but less lofty ground, within a short distance of the wreck, and where a lovely forest view surrounded them on every side; opening glade after glade in all the gorgeousness of tropical beauty; the sea closing each vista on one side, and the deep shadow of the surrounding groves on the other.

By the aid of the frigate's stores, and his own unwearied toil, Ramsay had, in a fortnight, put together a very fair apology for a cottage, one story in height, roofed with shingles, and divided into three rooms: the sitting apartment being in the middle, his own chamber on one side, and that of Angela on the other.

Having found the log of the frigate, which proved her to be H. M. ship Alcibiades, he entered in it a detailed account of his discovery of her wreck, and the steps he had subsequently taken.

Here her history being fairly supposed to be at an end, he made a minute of Miss Livingstone's account, that the ship had for hours before her wreck been engaged through the greater part of one night, and finally run down, when every one who possessed the power of crawling out of her had thronged on board their opponent, under the belief that the Alcibiades was foundering —that Miss Livingstone, refusing to desert her wounded brother, had remained on board—and that after being driven at the fury of the gale the whole of the succeeding day and night, she had gone on shore early on the subsequent morning, and remained immoveable; that none of the many wounded had remained on board, save those unable to help themselves, and these, from the consequent neglect, had all died.

That the ship had been deserted as foundering, Ramsay had little doubt, for when the tide ebbed, so that he was enabled to inspect her bottom, he found twenty-seven shot-holes betwixt wind and water on the larboard side, and which had only been prevented from finally proving fatal by the sudden fall of the fore and main masts over that part of the ship, and their sails having acted as a barrier to the entrance of the water. The shot themselves had not gone through her, being arrested by the casks, cables, and other matters in the hold of the ship, and being most probably fired from a long distance at first.

This duty as an historian discharged, he next availed himself of pen and ink to commence and keep a journal of his own transactions, while the days chased each other away with all that noteless rapidity which accompanies man's happiness.

Six weeks had soon passed, and, the first rude necessaries of life had been procured, every day added to their stock of luxuries and comforts; nor had the lovers yet begun to find that their lot was one of sorrow, or fitted for compassion, as castaways on a desert island.

The furnishing of their house being carried to the

utmost extent that they desired, Ramsay fitted up a small boat for fishing and sailing; and in this, when the heat of the sun was sufficiently abated, and often before it had risen to that point which proved annoying, did the happy pair launch out on the calm and deep blue waters that swept round their isle, and pass hour after hour in seductive sport, or rambling through woods and scenes that seemed made for vows of love and constancy—"places that pale passion loves"—give themselves to the full enjoyment of that unrestrained confidence and converse, from which the idle fetters of power had long sought to debar them.

Everything was happiness and joy—so exquisite, so unmixed, that, but for one dash of this life's bitterness, Ramsay would have feared that it was some distempered vision, which the bright beams of morning, or the rude summons of the watcher, was suddenly to dispel. That trace of the serpent was to be found in a question which his heart too frequently, too urgently forced on his consideration—Where was this to end?

From the hour they rose, till the moment they separated for the night, they were for ever together. Companions in labour—joy—or reflection; whether by the gray cool light of morning they went forth to sail and fish upon the waters, or read together during the heat of the noon-day, or sauntered forth at sundown to listen to the song of the woods—"Voice of the desert never dumb"—still the same links bound them in a union seemingly indissoluble. The face of either was as a mirror, that reflected the happiness of the other; and even in the hours sacred to repose, that harmony and fellowship seemed to be renewed in sleep which had been so unbroken during the hours of the day.

Well might Ramsay question of himself—"Where is this to end?" Under any other circumstances, not a moment's doubt could have crossed him. Fully aware of an attachment of which she had ever been too artless, too confiding, even to attempt the concealment—per-

fectly satisfied as he was, on the other hand, that his own affection was of that deep-rooted nature, which alone can survive the blasts of worldly affliction, and the still more perilous ordeal of satiety—had they been in the ordinary track of civilisation, he need not have hesitated an hour to ask her hand in marriage.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

> While on the white-lashed coursers of the storm,
> The spirit ship flies horribly and grim.—THAKHERIS.

For the first month after the discovery of the Alcibiades' wreck, Ramsay had been in daily expectation of some ship appearing off the island, by which they might be returned to the world, and the reward of all his sorrows bestowed on him in the hand of her he loved.

Day by day, as each succeeding sun awoke him to his labours—then indeed "labours of love"—this hope had been strong in his bosom; but, after the fourth week, it as gradually declined, and now he had indeed too great reason to fear that he was placed on an island which, however lovely and fertile in itself, was still too little in the path of the busy world moving around him on the "face of the waters," to render his warm expectations very likely to meet success.

Gradually, therefore, came the belief that his lot for life was cast, and that it was his duty to submit to it. Cheerfully he could have done so, had he been able to call his by the pure and sacred bonds of marriage, one who already possessed every affection of his bosom—every thought of his mind. The only mode of effecting this, was by the union which the church sanctioned in his own country—that of giving a marriage writing.

But lonely and unprotected as Angela was—thrown upon his tenderness—his honour—his generosity—he shrank from anything that could for a moment seem

selfish; from anything that could carry to her mind a belief of his taking advantage of the misfortunes that had thrown so completely in his power, the person of one who had already bestowed on him her heart.

Nor less did he recoil from the idea of either word or deed that would in the least degree sully the pure current of that mind, which he yet hoped was to prove to him "a well of living waters."

These reflections, then, amid all his joys, taught him the imperfections of human bliss under any circumstances. One evening, while his thoughts were thus engaged, and Angela was leaning on his arm, they paced a favourite walk commanding a full view of the sea. The moon was shining in all the transcendent loveliness which is so characteristic of those climates, and the wind at north-west was blowing a heavy gale.

Protected from its violence by a dense palm-grove at their back, the bright sparkle and dazzling effect of the wind upon the water added to their harmless joys. A sudden cry of delight from Angela, as quickly followed by one of alarm, put to flight all Ramsay's sombre reveries.

"What's the matter?" hurriedly demanded our hero, fearful for the moment that she had been bitten by some snake or scorpion.

To this question Angela replied not; but pointing, with a blanched cheek and distended eye, to seaward, Ramsay at once discerned the cause of her alarm.

Even on his firm and determined features the sight which he now beheld seemed to create a deep and solemn effect, mingled with a certain superstitious horror, approaching as near to fear as his unflinching spirit could permit any emotion of his mind to gain.

Such was the force of the gale at that moment blowing, that any ship, however stanch in her bearings, however admirably fitted in her gear, would have been sorely puzzled to have carried so much as a single reef out of her topsails, even if those sails, when close reefed,

would have stood in their bolt-ropes. Yet there, before them—some two miles distant from the land—cruised that which to all appearance was a large-sized frigate, carrying royals, topgallants, topsails hoisted to their mastheads—unreefed courses, gib, and driver—the sea around her a complete mass of foam, with the fury of the tempest, and yet she hardly bending to the blast, and sailing onward calm and majestic as a swan over the unruffled bosom of the Thames.

Nor was this all—about the whole ship there appeared a degree of airiness and unsubstantial mist, that argued her to be less of this world than that spiritual realm beyond our investigation, which is for ever harrowing our thoughts, yet defying our research.

At the time that Ramsay's attention was drawn towards her, she was crossing a vivid break of moonshine, where the bright silver beams seemed multiplied and redoubled by the broken surface of the waves on which they fell. Yet there—no shadow in this demon ship was visible; the moonlight shining distinctly through every sail, that defied the tempest—dimmed only a little, as it were, by the intervention of some unreal misty object, but still distinctly bright and clear as the light of moonshine ever yet could be.

Again, as she rode lightly over the tremendous waves, nothing could be more clearly defined than the dark line of the horizon seen through all her sails, rigging, and gear; nor did even her hull appear to be a thing of this world, but vast, dark, threatening, and portentous; there was the same look of mist and mystery about its colossal proportions that rendered so horrible the sails above it.

As Ramsay and his beloved companion gazed on this startling and inexplicable sight, he felt her soft arm tremble most perceptibly though it reposed on his, and its owner involuntarily drew close towards him for protection, while the terrible stranger shot securely and swiftly along the threatening ocean.

"What can that horrid sight portend?" asked she in a whisper. "Surely it cannot be——"

A pause ensued, and then both exclaiming in one breath, answered the question: "It must be—'The Flying Dutchman!'"

Nursed amid sailors, and accustomed from infancy to hear the thousand and one tales of superstition in which seamen of all classes—officers as well as men—delighted at that time to indulge; of a lively temperament, quick fancy, and extreme susceptibility; the tale of the Flying Dutchman, in all its endless varieties, yet never-failing similarity, had produced on the mind of Angela a deep and ineffaceable impression.

None knew better than herself the universally accepted tradition, that this spirit ship was never seen without some evil following, as a satellite in its train, to those who had unfortunately witnessed it. While, therefore, she clung more and more closely to Ramsay's arm, and gazed with a frantic earnestness of horror on the spectacle that so alarmed her, she did not for an instant cease to entreat her lover to turn homewards.

Neither, however, found themselves able to withdraw their facinated gaze, until the Flying Dutchman, passing round a deep projecting headland, vanished from their sight.

The exciting cause was gone, but the shock had been given, and the power to withstand it was at an end. The spirit ship was no sooner lost to her sight, than Angela fainted in Ramsay's arms.

Carrying her carefully and tenderly to the cottage, he succeeded in restoring animation; but the happy, easy flow of spirits seemed destroyed—at any rate for the time. No arguments that he could use were sufficient to re-assure her; no philosophic reason, that the phantom they had seen was merely the reflection of some other ship sailing in calmer weather and in smoother seas, could for a moment convince her that what they beheld was a mere optical delusion, and

even less connected with the world of spirits than themselves.

The more commonly received belief in some approaching evil had possessed her mind, and resisted every effort of Ramsay to dispel it.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

> Ah! canst thou bid my deep affection yield
> To forms that foster happiness no more?

In the course of two days, Angela had so far recovered this melancholy prepossession as to feel inclined, in some degree, to laugh at her own fears. But the very next morning, as they were about to start off on a fishing expedition, a repetition of this harrowing sight was observed by them, and that under circumstances of additional force and clearness, that not only strenghtened tenfold all Angela's former fears, but threw the dark cloud of their distrust over the not easily agitated mind of our hero.

He, too, had often of course heard of the Flying Dutchman, and in other times had been anxious to witness that awful sailer of the deep; but now that it appeared before them in all the dread accompaniments of its deathlike state, heightened by their own lone situation, both our young friends wished, from the profoundest depths of their souls, that such a disturbing phantom had never blasted their young sight.

More and more did Ramsay now regret that no ship approached their island, to offer an opportunity of his making Angela his own. Against superstitious terrors, the strongest temperaments are too frequently unable to bear up, and no external security is sufficient to satisfy the mind afflicted with them.

Hitherto he had always had the happiness of seeing Angela leave their mutual room, to seek her solitary

pillow, with that cheerful sense of security which was the best guarantee of sound and refreshing slumber.

Now the hour of retiring was prolonged—its approach observed with pain, and morning too often returned without that sense of reinvigorated health, which had always hitherto marked the lovely and blooming countenance of Angela.

With an innocence that knew no thought of harm, her fair expansive brow was offered to the affectionate lip of him who possessed every claim to her gratitude and devotion but those which a husband alone can possess—who had shown towards her every delicate attention, every effectual protection and support, but those which a husband's sacred duty can alone afford.

Another fortnight passed, and still no ship appeared; but the harrowing spectre of the Flying Dutchman was again observed—again produced that nervous unhappiness—that involuntary pining of the mind and body in his companion, which Ramsay noted day by day, with a distress that conveyed its effects to himself.

He could now scarcely doubt that he was for ever shut out from the world; and still more questionable did it begin to appear to him, that two beings whom misfortune had banished from all its refinements and advantages, should have what portion of happiness was still attainable by them marred, abnegated, and destroyed by an over-scrupulous fastidiousness that, arising in an honourable sense of duty, might yet become a means of leading him into the other extreme, if he took not care to view it in the true and proper light.

Another conjecture here arose to his mind: supposing some accident deprived Angela of his assistance and care, how cruel, how miserable would be her lot, condemned to pass the remainder of her days without aim, object, society, or converse—nothing for which to hope, to love, to live—unable to conquer the daily difficulties of existence, and sinking beneath the slow effect of the miseries surrounding her.

But how different would be her lot if they were married, and if to the happiness of bestowing on him herself she added the tender title of a parent—she gained, to swell and guard her other joys, those of a mother? If they were destined to live on till years should overtake them, age, that stiffened his limbs and cut short their vigour, would happily perhaps, have matured those of a son, to cheer the decline of life, and render its other burthens the more easily borne; while, should his existence be suddenly shortened, how inexpressibly would the dark portals of death be cheered by the knowledge, that the partner of his affections and sorrows was not left behind without some kindred hand to console and care for her!

These were serious considerations not easily to be overlooked; he determined to wait another fortnight, and if no ship appeared in the interim to take them from the island, he then felt that he should be bound, in every point of view, to determine on the course of conduct which he should adopt for the future guidance of his own life, and that of her whom Providence had committed to his care.

With all the anxiety of one who considers the interval to bear with it matter of the last importance, Ramsay watched the dim horizon during the fortnight succeeding the resolution just mentioned.

The two intervening sabbaths passed, marked by the solemn exercises with which he had always been accustomed to observe them. The last day of the allotted fortnight elapsed, and nothing more than the occasional gleam of a tiny speck on the dim horizon announced the approach of a sail.

When the sun went down he at once abandoned the hope that had so long tormented him, of quitting the island on which he had been deserted, and addressed himself to the consideration of that course of conduct most likely to contribute to the happiness of himself and companion, since they were now to remain upon it in all probability for their lives.

After most mature and deliberate consideration, he was unable to discover any satisfactory reason which forbade his making a proposal of immediate marriage to Miss Livingstone, by that form of written contract which was common in his own country, and which would establish the validity of the union or the legality of its issue, should relenting fortune ever restore them to their own country.

The only difficulty that now presented itself, was that of breaking to her the conclusion at which he had arrived. Here, however, more fortunate than in many things, chance gave him an opportunity of so doing, in a mode of which he most gladly availed himself.

Within a few days Angela attained her eighteenth year, and on the morning of her birthday after wishing her a long and happy recurrence of the anniversary, he placed within her hands a paper, folded in the form of a letter, and saying, it was his birthday-offering, requested her to tell him, on his return from shooting, whether it was such a one as she could accept.

"Nay, then," replied the fair and laughing girl, 'since it comes from you, I do accept it, and that without a moment's thought or hesitation."

"It is like your generosity to do so," replied Ramsay, lifting her hand to his lips; "but I shall not less esteem the kindness, if you as readily do so after giving it a day's reflection."

"What can it be then?" demanded she, her colour rising, and her deep blue eyes sparkling like sapphires with the ingenuous beauty that so distinguished her countenance, raising the packet at the same time with the most eager curiosity, as if no moment should be lost in mastering its mystery.

"Not now—do not read it now, Angela—wait till I am out of sight, and then give it your best consideration. I shall not be back much before sundown. If you accept my birthday gift, I shall find you in our mutual sitting-room; if you refuse it, you will have retired to

the privacy of your own chamber, and I shall have been spared the pain of your denying the only request the monarch of the isle has ever made to his fair and beloved visiter."

CHAPTER XL.

When thou art by, can I of falsehood dream,
Or falter "No," when Nature whispers "Yes?"

Some hint of Ramsay's meaning, and the nature of the packet, in all probability, here occured to Angela's mind. The hand which Ramsay held trembled violently —the blood mounted even to the very summit of her clear, ample forehead, and though her eyes were averted towards the ground, Ramsay marked the large tears coursing each other rapidly over the dark silken fringe of lashes, and the war of emotion so visibly raging within her bosom.

Whispering in her ear the oft-repeated vow of affection, and a deep-felt prayer for her happiness, under any circumstances, Ramsay turned away toward the deeper alleys of the forest.

For some time she watched the gradual departure of her lover, as his athletic figure faded into the deep and massive gloom of the distant trees; and Angela remained still sitting on the rustic bench, near which they had parted; her hands were folded before her, and contained the still unopened present of the morning, and her eyes fixed with deep solemnity on the hollow glade.

Still, at intervals, fell those large bright drops, which had traversed over features far too lovely ever to be sullied with a tear. Still the delicate and high-arched nostril showed the ruby current circulating within, from the cause that had so excited her mind—still the finely formed and slightly pouting lip trembled with the nervousness of deep feeling.

At last she summoned courage to open the paper and

read its contents. The crimson on her neck fled and came during its perusal, like the flashings of the aurora. The eye, so framed for the eloquence of every softer feeling, glowed bright and piercingly brilliant. Again and again the brief writing was gone over. The eye, losing its intense brightness, sought the repose and reflection of its own lid. The colour faded altogether from her face, and she reclined her head upon her hands in the attitude of deep thought.

Rising from her seat, after a little time thus spent, she retired to the cottage, and flinging herself on the sofa that had formerly ornamented the cabin of the Alcibiades, poured forth her thoughts and prayers to Heaven. The paper that Ramsay had given to her was simply a writing of marriage, without other words or comment. She had placed it within her bosom, and, tranquillized and assured at once by the act of supplication, she sank into a profound slumber.

A well-known step first roused her from this prolonged repose. She started up, with mingled emotions of fear and love. Something seemed to be weighing on her heart—some part to be acted or gone through—she knew not what.

The long shadows of evening were falling athwart the silent forest as seen from the window; and the tall figure of Ramsay passing recalled to her the circumstances under which she was placed,—the decision she was to give; both of which, from the moment her eyelids closed, had of course been totally forgotten.

Maiden delicacy, powerful love, gratitude, and reserve, all struggled in her heart for precedence while the lost time admitted of her taking counsel of neither. —What course was she to pursue?

Ramsay, meanwhile, was not less agitated—truly, indeed, *non passibus equis*, did he, at an earlier hour than he intended, turn his steps towards that home which now contained for him all that the earth could yield either of happiness or misery.

Again and again, as he approached the hallowed spot, did he pause and question of himself what answer Angela would give. How would he find her? If within that room which her future presence was to gladden and adorn, with what an eager transport of delight would he not rush forward! The light changed—it fell upon another and a darker picture. Could it be possible that he should find her absent, retired—shut from him? How cold, how terrible a blank would life become!

Swayed by these various thoughts, his once firm footstep faltered, and more saddened by apprehension of the latter than exulting in over confidence of the former view, he advanced towards his own door with the slow and dejected pace of a criminal, rather than the eager fleetness of a lover, whose anxious haste spurns at the dry ground on which it races to the goal.

He reached the cottage, but something seemed to rivet his glance to the ground. He dared not look in. He gained the entrance hall—the inner door stood open. Surely, if she were within, it would be closed. He could go no further,—his worst fears seemed about to be realized. No—he heard some one within, surely. The sense of hearing strained to the utmost point of accuracy, distinctly caught the heaving breath of some one whose heart throbbed beneath no usual impulse. Another step brought him in sight of Angela.

Ignorant of the cause of her involuntary presence in that room, he uttered a loud shout of joy, and sprang forward.

Confused—surprised—taken unawares as she was—it was too late for thought; but truth, nature, and affection supplied its place; and in the next moment her tears and blushes were hidden on that bosom which was to prove the sacred haven of her life,—the honourable pillow of a mind that was committed pure as the snow to the sacred guardianship of a husband.

CHAPTER XLI.

The greatest wynde is on the highest hilles,
The quiet lyfe is in the vale below.

Ramsay was at length happy. In the fulness of his joy, he feared that some impending calamity must be near at hand, to balance the deep debt he owed to heaven for the perfect nature of his bliss. Since Angela's consent was thus mutely given to their marriage, no further mention or notice of it passed between them till the following day, when the service appointed for that rite was read by them together; and their vows of truth and unity solemnly uttered before the Deity, whose altars are the hills of his hand, not less than the humbler structures of his creatures.

They then both subscribed the marriage-writing, which Ramsay, in default of more proctor-like settlements, had drawn up; and pressing to his heart one who was in future to be part of himself, Ramsay, with no stoic's eyes, drew his young wife's trembling arm within his own, and, with a feeling of grateful ecstasy that could find neither utterance nor expression, they rambled towards the shore.

How doubly beautiful to the entranced pair appeared the face of their only parent, their sole friend—Nature! The horror which had often appeared to hang over the romantic but solitary shore of Lonelie seemed vanished for ever; and if their eyes sought the sea, it was no longer with the ardent wish that it might bear some friendly ship towards them, but simply that they might, by the admiration of its beauties, feed those deep yearnings of the soul whose strength had suddenly become so powerfully deepened and augmented within them.

How the day passed they knew not. Ramsay twined the exquisitely scented blossoms of the golden orange fruit in the glossy ringlets of his beautiful bride; and while they enjoyed the shade of the ancient gloomy

cedar, or vast and magnificent mahogany tree, he climbed the towering date palm, to shower its luscious fruit near the worshipped feet of Angela, or shook down the milk-bearing cocoa-nut to supply the wants of thirst.

With fancy soaring wild over the beautiful picture around them, the future seemed gilded with the reflected brightness of those happy hours; and when, as the sun sank into the burnished world of Western waters, they, too, sought their home amid the coolness of the evening, the thousand harmonies of the grove, and the soothing repose of nightfall, the possession of worlds, however rich in produce or civilised in cultivation, could have added nothing to their hopes, nothing to their joy.

The hours which proffer to man's enjoyment delights like these, are as the trees in Aladdin's cave, budding with jewels of inestimable riches—gems beyond price. Few there are in life who have not, at some past period, clasped in their hands the glowing fruit. Alas! with what a strange host of feelings do we look back at the time of their possession!

Prized not as they should have been, retained not as they might have been, it is only as experience succeeds to youth we learn the painful lesson, that of such a flowering there is no second spring—of such a fruition no returning summer! No forthcoming autumn permits us to reap the second crop of such a harvest, and the cold torpidity of winter can alone survive their flight!

Such was not the case, however, with Angela and Ramsay. Formed, happily, in a mould which fitted them expressly for the quiet tranquillity and wise share of happiness that fall to those who have set up the palladium of their innocent pleasures in solitude, it was still enough to them that they remained to each other, untouched by illness and unvexed by care.

The beauty of the surrounding scenery, the fairy nature of the climate in which they dwelt, even the very labours and occupation to which their position

incessantly forced them, added to the durability of the music that rounded in the harmony of their lives.

No idle, envious fools, shut out from every chance of bliss in their own persons, were there to make or meddle with tales malicious or absurd. Nothing tended to draw away one kind emotion from the mutual service of each other. The very fact of their banishment in the lonely desert where they lived, hemmed them in with every kind forbearance—every anxiety to oblige and delight each other, as naturally as the ocean bounded in their isle.

Month after month glided away in this undisturbed serenity of delight; and had their votes been taken up to the end of the first twelvemonth which ensued upon their marriage, as to whether they should return to the jarring world, or remain in the little Eden that witnessed all their felicity, they would have preferred to have seen neither man nor ship to tempt them to the folly of risking an exquisite certainty for a doubtful advantage.

With these feelings, they had long ceased to regard the sea as a likely channel which was to bring a ship to their rescue; and if, as I have said, their eyes ever wandered over its horizon, it was with any feeling rather than that anxious scrutiny which a year before had prevailed with such intense strength in Ramsay's mind.

Even the sight of the *Flying Dutchman*, which they still occasionally saw, gave scarcely more than the transient alarm that lasted out its presence; and if Angela still shrank closer to her husband, as its thrilling and spectral appearance called up all the woman in her heart, she felt that it was her husband who stood beside her; and in the very name alone she found a tower of strength—a portion of herself more dear than her weak tongue could tell, or throbbing heart bear witness for.

Accidents they had, and crosses, and more than once in their inseparable ramble had encountered perils that threatened for the moment to dash to earth their almost

perfect joy; but these passed gradually away from time to time as they occurred, and like night mists leaving the moon more brilliant from momentary shadow, so they felt their peace and tranquillity the more insured, from its having withstood a few of those threatened calamities which are the inseparable concomitants life.

CHAPTER XLII.

Of dim and solitary loveliness
I learn'd the language of another world.—MANFRED.

A TWELVEMONTH, then, had passed over the heads of Angela and Ramsay. The former was now nineteen, and the latter five-and-twenty; an age that promised every congeniality of sentiment, while it placed the burthen on the right shoulder. Health and a long life were before them—more brilliant, more delightful, than most mortals may hope to enjoy.

With every succeeding day their mere temporal comforts had been increasing about them, and that deep bathos from love to life, we must as a veracious chronicler, explain and declare. To all the vegetables, fruits, and productions natural to the island, Ramsay had added from the frigate's stores both potatoes and peas; while the Alcibiades, having still had on board, when Ramsay first discovered her, some of the porcine creation, a few goats, and several fowls, these living treasures had so increased upon his hands, as to render want next to impossible, without some sudden mortality which it was idle to anticipate.

The soil, moreover, was so prolific, that two days' labour out of the seven sufficed most amply for reaping all that they required from its grateful bosom. The ship had of course contained a great quantity of flour, and though much had been thrown away from its condition, a plentiful supply still remained; and failing

this, he had discovered one of the species of palms, whose fruit would supply all the farinaceous food that they were likely to require.

Considerable leisure, then, was thus left on the hands of the young married couple; and when all the repairs necessary to their house, their clothes, and other minor duties had been discharged, they read and re-read the small library the wreck had brought to shore; and, while the sun permitted, amused themselves in those out-door recreations which best preserve the health both of body and mind.

On the first anniversary of their wedding, the past year seemed to have gone like a dream of a summer morning; and, filled with gratitude for the past and security in the future, they thought with equal pride and pleasure that not a moment's uneasiness had ever found expression from the lips of either.

A few months more, and the prospect of their happiness was likely still further to be increased; but some portion of care and anxiety, at the same time, once more found an entrance into their little paradise; and though neither of them could contemplate the blessing of such an addition to their happiness without intense rapture, yet the fond father could not but anticipate with dread the increased danger which such an event must bring with it on Angela.

But even these forebodings increased, if such a thing were possible, the devoted and idolising tenderness with which he regarded the young, fair, happy thing that ministered around him.

How beautiful they looked! Ramsay, in all the firm, elastic hardihood of manly vigour, his features bronzed and mellowed, and his limbs developed by toil, exposure, and exercise, and his glossy black hair curling in wild luxuriance over a small, well-set head, and a countenance as frank as day.

Around him frolicked Angela; light and sylph-like in her motions as Ariel, her frame was yet rounded

with all the grace that captivates us most in women; her exquisite face laughing, bright, and mobile as the mimosa, to the passing action of the moment. She smiled, and her fond husband thought that mirth had never yet worn so lovely a form before. Some pensive story "which his youth had suffered" became the theme, and the deep-set eyes of blue were the very soul of expressive melancholy; while

> "Adding zest to life's young spring of joy,
> The gay and golden natives of the clime,
> On wings that lately brushed the rainbow's hues,
> Fed from her royal hand, and proffered homage,
> Like gorgeous vassals, to the Queen of Love;"

serving, with many other pets which their cottage already sheltered, to engage those suparabundant cares and affections which females seem to feel the necessity of bestowing, though they, with Angela, were soon to possess an infinitely more suitable channel in which to pour forth all their natural tenderness.

Hitherto she had been Ramsay's inseparable companion: while he tilled the willing earth for their support, she sat by him in the shade, and either watched, or read, or sang to him.

With that mechanical facility which he had found so great a blessing in his extremity, he had constructed for his bride a gittern, similiar to those which he had often seen used by the natives of many tropical countries. There was certainly nothing very complex in its make, nor superlative in its sound, being contrived from nothing more than the woody shell of a dried gourd or pumpkin, of a large elongated shape, which he found growing wild. The necessary strings for it formed his greatest difficulty; but it was Ramsay's boast that no obstacle could overcome him, and, after many trials, success rewarded his labours by an instrument which, though poor in itself, served as an accompaniment to a voice, music indeed to him at any time, but thrilling with transcendent power when its liquid notes awoke, in those

enchanting groves, the dear familiar songs of boyhood and of home.

When at such moments, his heart swelling with a rapture in her society that partook of madness, and his love bordering too closely on idolatry, he thought of the bare chance of losing her, tears gushed from eyes that knew but could not resist their weakness, and the possibility of her loss overshadowed him with despair.

But he could not, he would not, believe that fate had so cruel a blow in store for him after all he had suffered; and resolutely shutting his eyes to the danger, he determined to exert himself to the utmost to avert it when it arrived, and not idly torment himself, and consequently her, by presentiments of an evil that might never arise, or indeed be partly brought on by foolish predisposition.

Still he viewed with dread her constant wish to accompany him as heretofore, though he could not find it in his heart to keep her at home in solitude, while he tasted the delights of the fresh air; and the charm of her society was magic indeed.

Whatever might be his pursuit—fishing, shooting, tilling, or sauntering among the gorgeous scenes of tropical loveliness around him—life seemed wanting in its brightest spell, if his ear missed the melody of her lips—if his arm bore not the gentle weight of hers, or his eyes saw not the personation of her gifted mind in the radiant countenance that indexed it.

Often would he question of himself if such happiness were not too great—too perfect to endure? Who, indeed, in the warm dreams of youth and devotion, has not sighed for such an Egeria* of the soul?

* See an account of the grotto and valley near Rome, described with such exquisite truth and tenderness in Childe Harold.

"Egeria, sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast, whate'er thou art
Or wert—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;

CHAPTER XLIII.

Oft to the hovels of the worldly wise
Young Love and Fortune steal in sorrow's guise.

Still time stole on with all the swiftness that marks the flight of happiness from man; still Ramsay's nervousness increased. At length, one morning, unable to confine his uneasiness to his own bosom, yet not daring to give expression to it in his young wife's presence, he put his gun on his shoulder, and stole quietly and unobserved away, to indulge his grief in a lonely ramble, leaving Angela busy with a book, and not suspecting that he was absent farther than the garden.

Having rambled to a greater distance than he had originally intended, and having made himself fully as wretched and miserable as it was possible for him to do, he began to conceive that the end of his walk was pretty well accomplished, and that it was time he should think of returning.

At this critical juncture, his strolling had led him to the edge of a narrow defile, which, almost impassable, and wholly overshadowed by the thick growth of trees, must, as he conceived, lead down to the shore.

The spot he had often before observed, with a determination of exploring its unknown pass, not then, because he had no time, but on the morrow.

This to-morrow, however, to a man who had such an abundance of time on his hands, seemed resolved, very strangely and perversely, never to arrive. At the present moment he really had less leisure for such an adventurous effort to explore, than he had often pos-

Or it might be a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring ———"
Childe Harold, Canto iv. Stanza cxv.

sessed before; and this, therefore, the contradictory and inconsistent nature of man's disposition, I suppose, led him to adopt for the undertaking.

After scrambling and cutting his way for some distance through the tortuous winding of what, in the rainy season, seemed to be a considerable water-course, he gained a rocky sort of table-land, terminating in a point, beneath which lay the bright clear sands of the sea, which gently murmured on their glittering margin. The tone of its soft but treacherous music spoke peace to his soul. The height of a few feet alone separated him from the surface of the sands; and a walk by their placid ripples would refresh his mind, wearied by its own conflict. An abrupt precipice of rock rose on his left hand, and jutting out, screened everything in that direction from his view; on his left stretched the broken shore, wooded to the very summit of the sea-cliffs, and gleaming in the many and rich tints of blue and green, of brown, of purple, and of yellow. Stooping hastily down to shorten as much as possible the leap he had to make to the shore, he dislodged several large stones from the bed of the water-course, and these, rumbling over the rocks with considerable sound, reverberated on every side,—he only gave them time to fix themselves, so that he might see how to clear them in his leap, and then, with that confident and heedless courage that so distinguished him, he thought not of the mode in which he should regain his position, but sprang at once down the twelve or thirteen feet to the ground below.

Hardly had he alighted, when the thought passed vaguely through his mind, as to how he should get up again. But accustomed to overcome everything by the determined bent of his nature, he imagined that some other spot would offer greater facility, or if not, he would find some means of scaling that.

After taking a few turns upon the sand, and marking how rapidly the tide came in, he bethought himself of the possibility of Angela's becoming alarmed at his

absence, and how little she was calculated to withstand its effects.

Determining by his haste to make up for lost time, Ramsay approached the spot from which he had leapt. But there, to his chagrin, he now for the first time observed the smooth steep face of the rock, at least twelve feet high at the lowest point—a height contemptible in itself to a man who, with the slenderest means, would have climbed precipices, but apt to prove very formidable to one who possessed no better means of scaling it than those with which nature had provided him in his hands and feet.

Knowing the uncertainty of being able to turn these to account, and the loss of time that might occur in doing so, while Angela, with a natural and fevered impatience, might be wondering at his unexplained absence, and watching his return—perhaps even in her anxiety gone out to seek him—Ramsay hurriedly ran along the little bay in which he was thus imprisoned, seeking for some spot where he might more easily find access to the woods above. To his dismay, he now ascertained that he had descended by a little valley to the shore; and the high hills, rising on either side, shelved over the beach precipitously, and terminated their capes in deep water. To the right, where all further view was so shut out, this was more particularly the case, while to the left he had the grief and additional mortification of perceiving the shores near where his own cottage stood—that beloved home he was so anxious to regain.

Could he but get round one point, this were a matter easily accomplished; but that point could only be passed by swimming, and our hero was already, as we have seen, too well acquainted with the tenants of the deep, not to know that his first plunge would end in his last struggle.

Tormenting and perplexing as his position was, the more so from having brought it upon himself without necessity, and by his own thoughtlessness, he yet found

that he must make the best of it. Every moment that he was losing was of that precious and irredeemable nature, for whose loss nothing could compensate.

He saw clearly that the tide was accustomed to flow six or seven feet high against the steep cliff; and if the water once found him there, with sufficient depth to float one of those voracious monsters whom he so detested, a death the most horrible and revolting must end the exquisite dream of bliss that he had for the last swift year and a half enjoyed. The very thought made his blood curdle; and, with an agitation in itself sufficient to have paralysed most men's energies, he set himself seriously to consider and combat the dangers that beset him.

Again and again he looked at the trivial height of the place he had to climb, exclaiming, half in anger, half in contempt, "Why, it is but thirteen feet at the outside." But, however much he might set his mind above them, no effort that he could make seemed likely to place his body in the same enviable position.

After trying for some time in vain to scale the smooth and abrupt declivity, he endeavoured with his tomahawk to notch out a few steps that should answer his purpose; but this was indeed shaving blocks with a razor; the blade only chipped at the corners and edges, and left him worse off than before. He next tried whether, by placing his musket against the cliff, muzzle downward, on a stone, he could so mount on its butt; yet this was but a poor distance to gain: after many trials the musket gave way likewise. He next tried, by running from the sea and jumping up, whether he could not get his hands upon the ledge of the accursed spot. But thirteen feet of height is truly arduous for the most vigorous of men—since Crichton's day—to think of leaping. The first two or three futile efforts told him so; but the thoughts of Angela's agony and suspense as the time of his prolonged absence stole on, gave to our hero the momentary strength of that giant despair; and taking a good run with heart of grace, he, at one tremendous spring, placed his grasp upon the edge of the ledge.

One or two stones thus loosened, immediatly rolled down on his defenceless head; but he was too fearfully excited to be sensible of minor ills, and being of little weight, he bowed his neck till the shower passed over it, hanging, meanwhile, suspended.

The rubbish fallen, he endeavoured, with prolonged and extraordinary exertions, to fix his feet on some inequality of the rock, however slight, which would enable him to make good the advantage he had gained; but, what with the action of the sea and the natural evenness of the rock, his efforts were in vain.

He felt his strength gradually ebbing, as his feet slipped again and again from under him, bruising and lacerating his knees, and his whole weight dependent on his aching arms. Still he would not give way—he would not be beaten; vain as was the effort, he continued to make it, till the exhausted muscles, giving way before his unquenchable spirit was touched, his fingers reluctantly, and against his will, lost their power of a firm hold, on the round worn edges of the ledge above him, and he once more fell heavily on the sands beneath; a bitter example of the ease with which we can into danger, and of the difficulty, if not impossibility, of extricating ourselves from it.

When poor Ramsay thus found himself baffled once more, he sat for a few seconds on the sand upon which he had fallen, deliberating, with as much coolness as he could summons to the assistance of his discomfited spirit, what was next to be done. He now, for the first time, had a moment's leisure to perceive that both his head and knees were bleeding copiously, and, what was of more consequence, his hands also; for his struggle with the flinty cliff had torn some of his nails off, and much of the cuticle from both palms and fingers.

But he gave no care to trifles such as these—his whole soul was with Angela—her grief—her sorrow—her wonder—her deepening alarm.

His rage boiled over to think that a paltry twelve feet

height of rock should, from his want of all appliances, be allowed to overcome one who had conquered so much. His bitter regret and self-accusations became loud and deep on his own folly; first, for leaving the cottage without mentioning to Angela the fact of his absence, and next, for idly thrusting himself into unneeded danger, when so much more than his own life and pleasure was to be consulted in the risk.

But this was idle. These torturing regrets and this delay impeded rather than helped forward his march over the perils, proving deeper round him every minute; and with strength, alas! considerably diminished, and with a heart foreboding and saddened, though not subdued, he, bleeding and trembling with excitement, rose once more to the task.

"Perhaps," thought he, "if I tie my handkerchief to my tomahawk, and throw it up as far as possible, it may get hooked into some of the stems of the trees that grow so closely down the cliff." Over and over again he tried the experiment, but the tether was not long enough to reach the desired distance, and each time the tomahawk came resistlessly home.

Yet he could not—would not believe that such a paltry impediment was to overwhelm him and his hopes; and stilling the tumult in his breast with that mastery of mind which the nobler degrees of intellect only can command, and banishing the remembrance of Angela, which tended more than anything else to unnerve him, he walked along that part of the beach which was still uncovered by the advancing tide, with all that terrible coolness and calm demeanour which undaunted bravery enables its possessor to summon, to face down death.

CHAPTER XLIV.

Then shall man's voice be hushed within thy walls,
And Death reign undisputed monarch there.

What would not Ramsay, in those moments have given for that chance-directed tree that turned up so readily to his hand before encountering the shark? Then the possession of it only saved the expenditure of a few moments of idle time—now it would save his whole existence, and, still dearer, infinitely dearer, than any such selfish consideration, the existence—at any rate, the hopes, the happiness of her in whose joys his own were inextricably wrapped.

Hoping, praying, struggling with his feelings, Ramsay paced along the shore, gazing intensely around him for such a godsend; but none was to be seen. The envious and gigantic hills frowned above him on every side, and shut in their unhappy prey; and he who had fought so many battles with his fate, had struggled on such stormy seas, begun, for the first time, seriously to think that his hour was come.

Wearied as he was with the long exertions he had made, he was not one, even on the field of death, to let his spirit ebb dully forth without a struggle with his foe. He would return to the baffling, paltry, tantalising spot once more, and see if, by piling up stones and sand, he could not so far diminish the height as to reach the top. But on looking around him, the stones were too few, and either small loose shingle, or massive detached fragments of rock, that not even his strength could have moved when fresh, much less now.

A favourite is said to have no friends, and an unfortunate might well be classed in the same miserable condemnation. Out of minor afflictions, many good turns of fortune come to relieve us; but, in the sadder crises of life, everything indifferently seems to declare war upon the falling. Abortive as this last attempt was, it

was even now more limited in its scope than it would have been, if adopted at first.

The sea had risen to a point where, as it approached the cliff, the sand sank rather than rose. The natural consequence ensued: the water rushed in like a perfect flood, and in a few minutes Ramsay was walking hurriedly to and fro, and vainly, and now, alas! languidly trying to accomplish what he could not effect, ankle-deep in water.

The fatal conviction of his approaching death at last broke upon him with an agony not to be told. He looked seaward, and there he descried, forming a dotted line outside the bank of sand, a few yards off, at which the shore commenced shelving in, the protruding fins and black heads of his abhorrent enemies, the sharks; all crowding round to rush upon him—all thronging forward with that most wonderful instinct for which they are so singular, and which, in all probability, is based upon their acute sense of smell.

Alas! how brief a space of time would elapse before their horrid teeth would be gnashing through and through his limbs, and tearing from one another's jaws, in bloody contest, that form on which, but a few hours since, Angela, the soft, the gentle Angela, had hung with all a lover's—a wife's—a mother's tenderness!

Fury, rage, madness, everything was in that thought! —but despair. Again he tried the leap he had before failed to effect, and he now perceived how greatly his strength was diminished, and how completely every chance of escape was gone. All that remained for him to do was to raise such a pile as he could of stone, sand, and seaweed, and standing upon this, take his chance.

Again he applied himself to his last labours! never cast down, however beaten, and running and splashing through the advancing tide, he endeavoured to heap as high a mound as possible. But with such materials—the stone so scarce, the seaweed lying so scattered, and

the sand wet, and necessarily dug with his hands from under the surface of the water—it was not to be expected that he could succeed in raising any mass at all large enough to support his weight, or high enough to ward off his insatiable foes.

During a comparative stillness in his operations, while arranging his materials in the best way he could, a loud and sudden splash broke on his ear, and startled him into turning round. The largest of his enemies had made a dart over the ridge of sand, thinking that the water was not so shallow, and now lay floundering on the shore, half covered with the waves, and with its gaping jaws idly gasping for its prey, not two yards from his feet.

As the danger thickened, Ramsay's self-possession and calmness seemed to concentrate themselves into a dying focus of their power.

"It is time, indeed, to retreat to my stronghold!" said he, sighing as he watched the vast efforts of the betrayed monster. "At another moment, and how I would have joyed to tempt the battle with that wretch! *Now*!—yet why not *now*? Die since I must, let us first slay our foe, though it be but a fish!"

The eagerness of combat, the rapture of the strife—"certaminis gaudia"—for a moment lit up his features, which the whirlwind of contending passions had before made pallid. Snatching up the remains of his tomahawk, and advancing with the swift foot of the avenger towards his terrific game, he lifted his hand to strike.

The shark's small black eye caught the movement. A tremendous effort, aided by the deepening water, enabled it to launch forward and meet its assailant halfway. Its round, blunt nose struck absolutely against Ramsay's leg—his foot almost entered the creature's mouth. But it sought not this: its object was to turn round on its back, according to its instinct and seize its prey, which its short under-jaw prevented it from doing in any other manner. In another moment,

the limb would be crushed to atoms in its resistless gripe, himself dragged down, and gorged, or carried out among the shoal, and torn limb from limb.

Now in this awful moment his stern eye quailed not, nor did his lip quiver. He attempted not to withdraw his foot from the monster's reach. Up flashed his broken tomahawk in the setting sun, and down it swept. Urged by his last remaining strength, the still existing portion of its blade passed, ere the fish could effect its turn, keenly through the white muscular throat of the shark, at the axis of its destroying jaws, severing everything to the very back-bone. The whole sea around him was a sudden pool of blood, and, almost without deigning to cast a look on his disabled victim, Ramsay, with the last flush of conquest on his brow, leapt on his little tumulus. Turning from the revolting sight before him, where the bleeding and dying fish, in its last terrific struggles was set upon and torn in rags by its hungry and voracious companions, he once more examined if there was any chance of escape which he had overlooked. Alas! there was none.

As a last resource, he called long, loudly, frantically —"Angela! Angela! Angela!" But the mocking, deafening echo alone met his fast sinking voice, and repeated harshly to his ear that gentle and beloved name. That she must long since have wandered forth to seek him he knew—he was sure. It was possible that kind heaven might have directed her steps that way. Could she only have appeared above—only have handed him her neckerchief, a branch of a tree, the slightest thread almost, with his invention would have enabled him to devise means for surmouting that mocking, that fatal rock.

But she heard not—she came not. That voice which she would have given her existence at that very moment to hear, reached her not—she was far distant far away. Nothing now could save him—he must die! He swallowed with a convulsive energy the sob of irrepressible

anguish that rose within his bosom at the thought; and since it must be so, he breathed hastily and fervently a prayer to Heaven, to guide and guard *her* from whom he was snatched so suddenly, so cruelly way.

That thought choked him—he could go no further. Even the shuddering horror of his own approaching fate faded into insignificance, at the thought of the pale, helpless, despairing, wretched Angela, unable to assist herself, protect her infant, or even have the miserable satisfaction of dispelling the terrors of suspense by the knowledge of his dreadful end. Of what strong materials must that mind have been formed, that, loving as he did, could think of this, and not fall into absolute madness!

His dreadful reverie was, however, suddenly broken as by a voice from the grave,—deep and severe. He who had heard no sound of human accents save his own and the silvery tones of her he loved, since his lot had been cast upon that lonely strand—looked round upon the sea, and there—if his mind had not wandered beneath the poignancy of his woe—he beheld a boat pulling straight on shore, the officers and men wearing the dress of Old Britain's navy.

CHAPTER XLV.

> So in our dreams, when danger threatens loud,
> Some unexpected succour comes to hand,
> Perplexing more than every peril past.

While, with reason tottering on the verge of insanity, Ramsay stood hesitating whether or not he could yield belief to the reality of approaching rescue, the light boat shot along the surface of the wave, with arrowlike rapidity, right towards the spot where he stood.

Some sudden command he heard given, but he hardly knew what it meant, though his eyes were riveted on the boat. Such a collection of undefined and harrowing

images filled his mind, that nothing clear or decided was retained upon its mirror.

The tossing in of the men's oars, as the bow of the boat dashed against his little hillock, led him to conclude what it must have been. Aghast and incredulous, still he could not believe that this was more than a wily cheat of overwrought fancy, and he shrank against the first abrupt rock, over which he had so rashly precipitated himself, and had been so unable to reclimb, weak, bleeding, almost dying; still in his gleaming eyeballs might have been read the determination to sell his life as dearly as possible; and that eye, in hours of quiet, soft, gentle and affectionate, now bloodshot and glowing, like a living coal, spoke of fiercer fires than those of reason. The first thing that seemed to rouse him to this world, was his observing that the boat's crew fell furiously upon the expectant sharks, striking them fiercely with their oars, and some with their cutlasses; while the animals, alarmed by the splash of water, and some perhaps by blows received, drew off to a safer distance, though still encircling the boat and Ramsay, and waiting the moment when they could dart effectively at the doomed.

When the seamen perceived that they had driven off those hideous creatures, they turned their eyes upon the solitary man, who, with his back to the rock, his face pale, wild, haggard, and streaked with blood, his clothes torn and wet, and his hand fiercely and resolutely grasping the handle of his tomahawk, was no bad personation of dying courage.

A minute's pause they gave—a minute's searching scrutiny in silence and in wonder—and then the captain in the stern-sheets, breaking silence, exclaimed—

"I say, my fine fellow, you're what you may call close-hauled, I think; where the devil did you spring from?"

The accents of his own language falling from friendly though unknown lips, conveyed strange transports to his heart, and told him, miraculous as it seemed, that he

was saved! His hand fell powerless to his side—his breast heaved with unusual impulse—the glare forsook his eye for some softer emotion—and in the next instant he had sprung amongst them, with open arms, and still more open heart. With a fearful eagerness they could not refuse, he implored them to pull away for a point of land to which he directed them, with the least loss of time. This point was the nearest approach to his own so lately happy cottage; but when he thought of what might now await him within its walls, his suffering was scarcely less than when, nerved to the last pitch, he awaited the most horrible death that the mind can well imagine.

It needed no other spur to the activity of the boat's crew than the statement of the facts. Their long oars bent to the water, as they dashed their light gig along, while the officer hailed a vessel not far off, to make sail and steer by them, as she was going at a much slower rate of speed.

Scarcely had the boat touched the shore by the side of the old wreck, than away flew Ramsay with one or two of his strange visitors to the cottage. With a sinking heart he looked into every room:—no Angela was to be found. Grief and dismay seemed to seal up the springs of utterance, as he thus found the confirmation of his fears. Again and again, the neighbouring woods and lovely bowers, through which they had so often roved in perfect and overflowing joy, resounded with the name of their fairest ornament.

No answer came back to the fond distracted call; but the agonised cry rang through the deep and darkening arches of the forest, lessening and lessening in its force, till it died away in a melancholy murmur, that sounded to Ramsay as the death-knell of his hopes, the moaning of her guardian spirit over the sad fate that had befallen her.

Then were remorse, regret, repentance, busy at his heart: then was the voice of self-condemnation louder

and more deep—more unanswerable than he at least had ever experienced—had ever deemed it possible to feel. This was his folly—his thoughtlessness—his deed. Thus had he repaid all of devotion, tenderness, and love, that it was possible for a woman to bestow. Now—now, she might be no more—perhaps even at that moment was expiring in some spot where, could he find her, she might still be rescued.

Yet who could say where she might have wandered—or what might have befallen her? His own recent and unexpected dangers added a fearful degree of truth to this dread, and in the abandonment of his grief he could only convulsively grasp his lacerated hands, and groan aloud.

His companions witnessed his agony, but still more ignorant how to avert it, stood sorrowfully around, in silence and surprise. At this moment an indistinct noise was heard in the distant recesses of the grove; a few of the leaves of the neighbouring forest were heard to rustle, accompanied by that peculiar brushing of the underwood in the distance, which indicates the passage or presence of some living animal.

Without thinking of or contemplating anything in the least degree unkind, or likely to wound the feelings of the agonised husband, the attention of the thoughtless seamen was at once abstracted.

Cooped up so long on board a small brig at sea, the least of the excitements of the shore became a matter of the greatest joy to them. Fully believing that the motion in the thicket was occasioned by some beast of prey, the natural impulses of the chase banished every other thought. Three or four muskets were in an instant levelled, their butts brought to the shoulders of their bearers, and fingers laid on the triggers.

"Hallo, my boys! here's a shot!" was the immediate shout of all.

"Stay, my men—stay for your lives!" cried Ramsay, flinging himself before the threatening barrels,—"this

is no beast of prey; this is something more than any beast I have ever seen in the island. Follow me, one of you—follow me. See, here it comes. Ha! who's spaniel is this?"

"Spaniel, sir! By Jove, so it is! I wouldn't the beast had been hurt for a week's extra pay. 'Tis the captain's pet dog, sir; she was under the stern-sheets when I left the boat. But there's something up now at any rate—Hey, Flora! Flora!"

"Follow her, follow her with me, my man; she knows you. Great God! she may have found my wife. Forward for your life, or we may already be too late."

With a short quick bark, that only ceased while the animal was endeavouring to make its way through the brushwood, the spaniel took a straight line with every mark of speed, as if it knew full well how great was the value at stake.

Every few minutes the sagacious creature made a pause, or retraced a few steps, when it found that the larger animals behind, with all their boasted reason, were unable to surmount obstacles as fast as its own small size enabled it to creep through them. Thus yard by yard it led them through paths that neither Ramsay nor any other human being had, in all probability, ever trodden before. At every step the agitated hopes of Ramsay grew stronger.

He was right in his conjecture. How indeed could he have mistaken the object that no gift of language could have more plainly declared? The spaniel suddenly halting beneath the boughs of a vast cedar, and barking vehemently as it reached its overshadowed trunk, Ramsay and his companion hurried up, and there, at its base, on the dried cones and branches, lay the senseless form of Angela just as she had fallen.

Long indeed was the suspense which Ramsay had to endure before he was blessed with the hopes of her revival. By her side lay a fresh plucked branch of oranges: peeling one of these, and moistening her pale

and delicate lips with the juice, and allowing the body to recline further back, that the blood, once more circulating in the head, might restore animation, with fear and trembling he awaited his doom, in the fact o her revival.

It was not until he had called frequently upon her name, with every endearing supplication that love in such alarm could suggest, that she showed any symptoms of returning life. Slowly, at length, re-opened on him those eyes, which like Cornelia's children, were the dearest treasures life possessed. The rapture of that restoration seemed, however, a full atonement for all the horrors of the day, chequered only by the reflection that its consequences might not yet be fully revealed to him, or its evils at an end.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Ah! who on gems of luxury or love
Can place the worth they merit, save by loss

WHETHER from exhaustion, or the delight of seeing Ramsay restored to her, Angela uttered not a word; and lifting her gently in his arms, on he bore her with the utmost care towards the cottage, forgetful, amid stronger feelings, of all he had himself undergone. Thinking it would be as well to prepare her for the sight of so many strangers, he on the road briefly related the circumstances which had restored him to some of his countrymen.

Having entered the cottage unseen from the rear, and taken the steps most likely to guard against the ills to be apprehended from her anxiety and exhaustion, he learned how correct had been his conjectures as to her course of conduct.

Alarmed by his absence, she had waited at home till her fears would allow her to do so no longer,—when she wandered out in every direction in which she con-

ceived herself most likely to meet him: but not daring to proceed far, lest she should miss the object of her search, she constantly returned to the cottage, found it still empty, and with increasing grief set forth again, till, in utter weariness and despair, she cast herself down to die, and knew nothing more till she awoke to find Ramsay leaning over her.

We may well imagine the feelings of Angela, on hearing to what humble agency she was in all probability indebted for restoration to that life which for her possessed so many charms of unsurpassable interest, so many ties of the most tender and endearing kind. Folding the dumb and recently-acquired friend in her arms, it was scarcely possible that a being endowed with reason could have received more passionate assurances of gratitude. Smiling at this warmth, and glad to see the excitement of her mind finding relief in tears, Ramsay laid himself gently by her side, and ere long had the happiness of seeing Angela fall asleep on his arm; stealing gently away, he found the sailors, to whom he owed his life, busy laughing, joking, and amusing themselves in the best way they could. The plan on which they had struck for this, was the scaling of a gigantic palm-tree of the cocoa-nut species, which grew not far from the cottage, and towered above the surrounding forest, "like the mast of some tall admiral."

The only one of the party not engaged was the officer who had steered him ashore, and who was walking to and fro, looking anxiously towards the forest, into whose depths Ramsay had so lately plunged.

On seeing our hero reappear from a different quarter, he inquired for Angela with a degree of kindness and anxiety that gave Ramsay a very favourable opinion of his humanity. Having expressed his hopes that no serious illness would result from the alarm which his wife had so unfortunately received, Ramsay invited his rescuers to accept such refreshments as his lonely island could afford; and spreading these forth in a marquée

which he had formed from the Alcibiades' sails, he gave the seamen such cheer as he thought would be most acceptable to them, and at length complied with the iterated request of the officer, that he would give some account of himself, and the strange scene they had witnessed.

As our hero proceeded in his story, he could not help thinking that his guest assumed somewhat more of the authoritative style of his majesty's officer than certainly was pleasant to his feelings, or necessary for the occasion. Knowing that this was a foible common to men in authority, when they met with any one junior to themselves in any service to which both might happen to belong, his good temper and philosophy making allowance, refused to take offence at this want of good breeding.

His guest expressed himself greatly surprised and interested at the conclusion of our hero's narrative, and in return informed him that he was Captain Robinson, commanding the Spider brig-of-war—that he had made the island and anchored off a smooth sandy bay, not far to the northward, where, having watered, he was pulling along the shore in his gig, admiring the scenery of the island, when Ramsay's voice came to his ear, and, by inducing him to pull as rapidly as possible to the spot whence it proceeded, enabled him to save his life.

Captain Robinson then said that he had a message to send on board his brig before sunset, by his midshipman who was waiting; and that as soon as this youngster returned, he himself should go on board. On hearing this, Ramsay offered to walk down to the wreck of the Alcibiades with the captain, which he did, the seamen accompanying them; and Captain Robinson, having walked apart with his midshipman, and given him his orders, sent his gig away, retaining only the cockswain with himself, and then going over the wreck of the frigate with our hero.

It certainly did strike Ramsay as singular, and some-

what suspicious, that his new acquaintance should think it thus necessary to retain a guard for his person, as it were. Still more unaccountable in his eyes appeared the brace of pistols belted round the coxswain's body; for when the boatmen had saved him from the sharks, he saw none of them so armed.

Still it was just possible that, excited and occupied as he then was, such a circumstance might not have engaged his attention. Captain Robinson also wore a heavy serviceable sword: but Ramsay had taken off his arms, and, in the absence of any thought of violence on their part, seemed to be utterly indifferent whether his present companions were equally confiding or not.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Give me but freedom and the wildest plain,
I envy not the realms of Charlemagne.

The sun was verging on the dark line of the horizon as Ramsay, Captain Robinson, and his coxswain ascended from the main to the quarter deck of the ill-fated Alcibiades. Sheltered by the cove into which she had been thrown by the fury of the sea, her once firm and still stout timbers had been little affected by the subsequent storms that had passed over her. Her decks and sides still held together nearly as well as ever; and though each returning tide flowed into the lower part of her hull through the shot-holes, she bade fair to survive the sapping effects of time for many years to come.

As her three visiters remained conversing upon the signal-locker, and conjecturing what could have been the eventful history that terminated in such a result, the measured sound of oars broke in upon their conference, and Ramsay, looking round, beheld the captain's gig returning, not however with a midshipman, but a lieutenant in her stern-sheets.

The boat pulled up alongside the frigate's wreck,

and the officer clambering up the side, by the aid of the coxswain, who flung him the end of a rope, was followed along the deck by two or three of the crew, armed to the teeth, and looking grim as Erebus.

These circumstances naturally struck Ramsay with surprise,—a feeling that deepened into a different emotion when he beheld their looks directed on himself, with an ominous expression, something between pity and anger. Surely nothing could be meditated against himself—no forcible carrying off against his will! where were his arms? Yet such an intent could never exist; and even if it did, eight to one offered him no chance of victory, and only justified him in any other alternative but force.

In silence and surprise he waited to see what was coming. The armed seamen drew themselves up in a line across the deck of the Alcibiades, utterly barring out any escape for himself. The lieutenant, armed likewise, walked up to the captain and presented him with a paper, which that officer opening, proceeded to read, taking off his eyes every now and then from the document to fix them on Ramsay.

Indignant in the extreme, and still lost in amazement at this strange behaviour, the blood rushed into our hero's features as he was about to demand the meaning of such treatment; he was, however, anticipated by Captain Robinson.

"I believe, sir," said the latter, suddenly abandoning the easy colloquial strain in which all their conversation had hitherto been conducted, for that short stern quarter-deck tone which ere now had sunk so deeply and painfully into his hearer's heart—

"I believe, sir, you said your name was Ramsay?"

After the long and delightful period which our hero had passed in perfect freedom and happiness, this sudden throwing round his neck the old and galling lasso of servitude and slavery was ill to bear. In the dilating nostril and gleaming eye of the unarmed man, as it

flashed a fierce reply to its assuming interrogator, might be seen the evidence of the angry passions called up within him.

For a moment he seemed to measure the power of his new oppressors, armed as they were; and had he possessed similar weapons, his Herculean make warranted the conviction, at that very point of time creeping into their hearts, that most, if not all of them, would have paid the penalty of their lives before they could have subdued him.

But remembrance of Angela came over his mind, like the words of peace upon the storm. There was still a future for him—still a point of hope; life was not his own to sport with: and stifling the defiance which rose so naturally to his lips, he gave back his inquisitor look for look, and answered proudly, "My name is Ramsay—and what then?"

"Simply that my duty obliges me to perform the unpleasant task of arresting you in the king's name."

"For what?"

"That, perhaps, you are much better enabled to tell me, than I you. I hold in my hand the Admiralty order for my present act, a copy of which has been forwarded within a late period to every king's ship on these seas."

"Will you allow me to read it?"

"Certainly."

Ramsay took the letter from the lieutenant's hand, and then read an Admiralty circular, authorising the arrest of his hapless self, whose person was set forth with every particular of description which usually accompanies such hue-and-cry authorities.

With a deep sigh our hero refolded the order, and returning it into the hands of Captain Robinson, added: "After a perusal of such authority, I can only give myself and wife up to your custody, protesting against the injustice of this arrest, and relying on your feelings as a gentleman that you will consider the effect which

any severity may produce on one for whom, in this as in all other matters, I must feel more deeply than for myself. This feeling it is which induces me to request that you will accept my word of honour that I will attempt no escape from your hands, and to allow me to effect the removal of my wife and self from this island, without her having the grief of knowing under what unhappy circumstances we leave a spot where Heaven has kindly extended to us many blessings. The only favour I have to ask for myself personally is, that you will, if possible, inform me of the crime with which I am charged. I give you my most solemn assurance that I am in utter ignorance of it; and if you should be better informed, I can scarcely think you will consider it your duty to add the pangs of suspense to sufferings which you may well conceive are already sufficiently severe."

"I accept your parole, sir; make yourself easy on that score," replied Captain Robinson. "Your good sense in surrendering yourself to the laws of your country entitles you to this consideration; and I shall be happy to discharge my unpleasant duties as leniently as possible. You must, however, embark to-night. I cannot tell you with what crime you are charged; for, as I have before said, I am ignorant of it, though, I am sorry to add, I understand that it affects your life."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Tossed on the drear expanse of Ocean's wastes,
Strange phantoms generate within the brain,
And Fear itself assumes substantial forms.

Trite as the observation is, unhappily mankind are but too often tempted at every turn of life to remark upon the incertitude of happiness. Twenty-four hours previous to this period of Ramsay's history, how little

did he dream of any interruption to the quiet tenor of his joy—much less the total revolution which had so suddenly come upon him!

The order to embark that very night seemed arbitrary, and was by Ramsay felt to be most distressing. But Captain Robinson declared himself unable to revoke it, from considerations connected with his ship, as the weather looked threatening and he did not choose to trust the brig to an unknown anchorage on a lee shore.

As the hour of nine o'clock struck, Ramsay found himself once more under way—once more trusting all his hopes to the faith of those false elements that had so often before betrayed him.

Poor Angela!—hers was the deepest grief, hers the darkest forebodings and the most irrepressible regret, as she beheld, melting away in the distance, those solitary but lovely and beloved shores, where, for a brief time, had been realised all that the most romantic imagination could dream of bliss.

What would have been her emotions, had she known the true circumstances under which those shores were forsaken? The cause for their departure, as alleged by her husband, was a point chiefly connected with her increased comfort and happiness, and the ineligibility of renouncing the refinements of civilisation for the mere freedom of barbarism. With much reluctance she was brought to adopt these views; and, now when the last shadow of Lonelee faded from her sight beneath the blue and swelling waves, she shed many unavailing tears at the remembrance of that dear dream which already seemed as completely flown, as if it had been but one of those phantoms of the vanished night that haunt the pillow when the sleep has passed.

The wind sang loud and mournfully through the ship's rigging, as it rose and swept along in still increasing gusts. The clear, deep blue of heaven, spangled with the innumerable lights of other worlds, seemed flitting

to and fro as the dazzled eye surveyed it from the moving deck. The seamen of the watch sat under the lee of the launch, and in a low, wild strain chanted to each other some of those songs with which they cheer the monotony of the sea. The officers paced to and fro upon the quarter-deck. No one broke in on the privacy of our hero, as he supported Angela with a comfort he assumed but could not feel; and endeavoured to persuade her that this fresh change in their destiny would be for the better.

The whole scene was one he had witnessed so often —had known so well—that of late years had worked him so much misery—the feelings that it stirred within him were so deep and troubled—that, persuading Angela to retire from the cold air, he felt a miserable luxury in the solitude which left him to brood over the threatening ills of life, unrestricted by the sense of her observation.

Again and again his thoughts wandered to the probable nature of the accusation made against him; but, lost in grief and doubt, he noticed not how sail after sail of the brig was taken in, as the wind increased and the sea rose with it.

Immersed in these painful thoughts, he paced the lee-side of the quarter-deck until long after seven bells had sounded forth the hour of half-past eleven. In anxious expectation of the next sound that was to terminate their watch, and proclaim the dread hour of midnight then close at hand, the seamen had roused up from their various sleeping-places, and gathered in little knots, rubbing their eyes, and wishing for the appearance of those reliefs which would allow them to retire to their hammocks.

It was indeed no witching time that might induce the hardy sailor, from the fineness of the night, or the easy prospect of light duty, to stay up longer than was absolutely necessary. Standing on her course under close-reefed fore and main topsails, storm jib and driver, and

with her topgallant-masts sent on deck, approaching midnight found the brig labouring heavily enough amid the vast seas, on which she plunged from crest to trough of each succeeding billow.

Scarcely five minutes could have remained wanting to complete the dread hour for which so many eager ears were watching, when their attention was suddenly arrested by a sound of a totally different nature.

"Sail on the weather-bow!" suddenly cried the look-out astern.

"Sail on the weather-quarter!" simultaneously roared the look-out at the cathead.

"Sail on the weather-beam!" chimed in the deep bass of the captain of the guard, who had the station of the waist.

"Holloa! what's the meaning of all this?" demanded the officer of the watch, who had been stumbling along the quarter-deck more than half asleep, and was now quite startled from his propriety by this sudden discord of his lookers-out.

The captain of the afterguard at the waist, and the mizentopman on the quarter, both at the same time certified to their own correctness, and so no doubt would the forecastleman at the cathead, had he been within hearing.

Having despatched one of the watch below for a glass, the lieutenant endeavoured to judge for himself; but a feeling of deep surprise, then incredulity, and lastly, of dismay, seemed to gather on his weather-beaten countenance as he did so.

"Well, Mr. Smith," said he to his mate, taking from his eye the glass which the latter had brought up, "I know not what to make of that craft. When I look at her from the quarter-deck, she seems to bear slap on the weather-bow. If I look at her from the gangway, I could swear she was directly a-beam; and when I go forward to the forecastle, for the life and soul of me I cannot but believe that she's just hanging off our quarter

I don't like the looks of her. Take you the glass, and see what you make out."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the mate, who, old in years as he was junior in rank, had weathered more gales than he now had hairs left on his head. In obedience to the command given him, the mate took the glass, and steadily examining the distant stranger from all three given points, came back with a countenance that in the bright deep starlight looked perfectly livid with emotion.

"For God's sake what's the matter, Mr. Smith?" said the lieutenant, as he saw his emissary return in this state of perturbation.

"Heaven have mercy on us, sir!" replied the mate, in a tone of voice approaching to a whisper.

"Why, what do you mean? what's the matter?" and the lieutenant's interrogatory intuitively sank to the same low pitch.

The mate shook his head, but did not attempt a reply, while the lieutenant with dismay levelled the telescope once more at the stranger.

"Don't you see, sir, what a press of sail she's carrying?" demanded Smith, in the same low tone.

"I can't believe my eyes in that, Smith; surely the glass is out of order, or the ship is pitching so heavily we can't see rightly."

"Oh, sir," groaned the mate, "we see rightly enough, more's the ill luck for us! I only wish we didn't! Why, I can see with my naked eye that she carries *royals*."

"And *topgallant* sails?"

"Ay, and topsails without a reef in 'em."

"The same with her courses?"

"Ay, and jib and spanker."

"Very true; and, though standing hauled like us, she scarcely seems to bend a feather's weight to the whole."

"As stiff under it all as a board, sir."

"And we can barely show a rag to the gale."

"And stagger under that, sir!"

"Why, it would blow any ordinary ship's mast out, if the canvass would but stand."

"Ill fortune to us, sir; she's no ordinary ship."

"Did you ever see such a sight before, Smith?"

"Never, sir; and please Heaven I never may again."

"It's an awful sight truly. But what a degree of dimness seems to hang over her!"

"Why, look at that rising star, sir; I can see it as plainly through her sails as she heaves on the waves—ay, as plainly as I ever saw anything in my life."

"Ay, does it—it's very frightful!"

"'Tis indeed, sir; and her hull too seems misty and uncertain like."

"What do you think she can be, Smith?"

"She can only be one thing, sir; and you know what that is, as well as if I named her."

"What! do you really think that is——"

"Yes, I do, sir."

"What! THE FLYING DUTCHMAN?"

The deep groan that broke from the mate's bosom was the only reply to this question; but, after a few minutes' pause, he added,—"In such a gale as this, Mr. Stephens, no ship could carry such a press of sail, or look as she does. Everybody knows that she has haunted these latitudes occasionally ever since a ship was a ship, or sailors went to sea; and for the last year or so, I'm told she's constantly seen in this beat, only we, being new cruisers, haven't had the bad luck to run against her before. Well, the Spider's cruise is up, that's all, sir. No craft ever saw THE FLYING DUTCHMAN and got safe to port again."

"Hush, Mr. Smith, the men must not know what we think, on any account, or we shall get no more duty done in the ship, happen what may, till yonder strange sight disappears. The captain must be told of this without delay. Take charge of the deck, while I go below and tell him what has happened."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the mate, gloomily; and then,

as soon as the lieutenant disappeared below, he added, —"Do what you may, we're doomed, all hands of us; so we may as well be prepared; and as for the men, their eyes want no glasses to tell the Flying Dutchman from any other sail that ever hove in sight."

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Oh, Pilot, 'tis a fearful night,
And we are far from land.—SEA SONG.

WHATEVER might have been the effect produced by superstition on the mind of the mate, in one matter at least he spoke with the most correct common sense.

The conclusion as to the nature of their ghostly visitant had been much more speedily adopted by the horrified seamen than by their two officers. The whole watch crowded on the forecastle and gangway, gazing with eyes of wonderment and terror, that nothing seemed able to satisfy, at the vast, dark, semi-transparent, pyramidical sail and hull that moved majestically along to windward of them, in a course parallel with their own.

No one who beheld, as Smith had remarked, the immense press of sail on which all the gale then blowing appeared unable to produce any sensible effect, doubted for an instant either the name or character of the strange sail; and with a unity of thought that did indeed wear the character of supernatural revelation, there buzzed from lip to lip the name of that dreaded spectre ship, whose appearance all classes of sailors ever beheld as the forewarner of destruction.

"THE FLYING DUTCHMAN!—THE FLYING DUTCHMAN!" were the words fearfully circulated around the gangway and forecastle. "THE FLYING DUTCHMAN!" repeated the terror-stricken boys of the watch, running down on the lower deck, and spreading the alarm among their brother seamen of the next watch.

The solemn hour of midnight had not even then been

pealed forth over the stormy waters, but it needed no louder alarm than these magic and awe-inspiring words, breathed in the low but startling tones of horror, to call from their hammocks almost every man and boy of the crew.

By degrees the fearful rumour reached aft to the steerage, and many a sleepy midshipman and youngster, who never in their lives had turned out to relieve the deck before the hour till now, sprang from their hammocks in the wildest haste, and scrambling on their clothes, rushed on deck, to witness a sight which many of them always hitherto considered fabulous, none of them had seen before, and which, though all dreaded, all were yet anxious to behold.

From the steerage the terrific name found its way even into the lieutenants' berth, and the mention of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN was there equally potent in banishing sleep, and calling up its would-be worshippers from rites so gentle, to the heart-thrilling spectacle of the phantom of the sea.

By the time, therefore, that Captain Robinson arrived on deck, in answer to the summons of the officer of the watch, he found assembled, and beforehand with him, every man, boy, and officer in his ship, not absolutely confined from illness to the decks below.

All seemed equally aghast—all equally desirous to disbelieve the truth of the apparition—all equally unable to do so.

Though not loud, still the discord of opinion that prevailed upon the upper deck was never yet surpassed in variety and confusion; some beheld one thing, some another, in the shape, form, sail, or appointments of the stranger, different from what any third observer would allow. All, with one accord, began to call to mind and narrate each hideous story which they had ever heard of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN's appearance, and the dreadful consequences that ensued; while a few, convinced of their approaching destruction, silently up-

braided themselves with their past crimes, and, with unfeigned repentance, sought such pardon as may be given to erring man at the eleventh hour.

A few there were who, in their own fancied superiority, or the greater callousness of their feelings, made a poor attempt to treat the spectre-ship as a subject for ridicule and jest. But the immediate indignation with which the efforts of these scoffers were received by the older and more experienced, speedily induced them to keep such sceptical opinions to themselves, and in most cases to alter them as speedily as possible; and when the change was once made, none were so abject in their credence and fear of it.

Suddenly all these murmurs were hushed, as the captain and lieutenant of the watch rushed hastily up the companion-ladder.

"Where is this piece of humbug, sir—this piece of gratuitous folly—I say, where is——"

The captain turned round to windward, and suddenly was hushed upon his lip the loud daring tone of incredulity, the incipient reproach of its believers. From the flush of anger, his cheek as suddenly wore the pallid aspect of supernatural emotion. He faltered in the proud haughty step with which long custom made him tread his own quarter-deck. Halting suddenly in his progress towards the gangway, and with distended eyes fixed wildly on the vague dim vessel of the dead, he seized hastily on the stanchions near him for support.

All had remarked the sudden and annihilating effect of the phantom on his strong nerves. Not a man in the ship but had seen him in the heat of action again and again, cool, as if merely enjoying the most ordinary pastime; and though convinced in their own mind of the ghostly nature of the stranger, they one and all were deeply anxious to see how the strong mind of their superior would treat its appearance.

The effect was instantaneous, and though speech was scarcely heard among the whole of that eager and

alarmed crew, yet the intelligence of their leader's admission of The Flying Dutchman, passed from eye to eye with electric quickness amongst them all.

In the midst of his agitated feelings, the consciousness of this fact seemed to press home upon the mind of Captain Robinson; for, making a strong effort, and forcing his features to assume that stern air of daring with which he was accustomed to lead on his men to death or victory, he advanced a step towards the gangway, saying to the observant lieutenant at his side,

"Quick, give me a glass!"

But however, by a strong effort, we may, in hours of doubt and danger, master the mere expression of our outward bearing, the voice is not so easily subdued; it is a mere involuntary agent in revealing the thoughts, feelings, and impulses of the soul it serves.

Deep, hollow, and sepulchral were the tones which issued from the captain's lips, and well did they denote the perturbation of mind which defied the utterer's control. If his saddened look had before added tenfold weight to the horror of the men, the unnatural depth and solemnity of his accents thrilled them still more, and crowding as nearly behind him as discipline, however weakened, would permit, they gave up their whole energies to observing what conviction would be wrought on their chief's mind by a narrower inspection of the cause of their dismay.

Long and anxiously did they wait, and strict and closely observant was the gaze which the captain for nearly ten minutes bestowed upon the cause of their alarm. But when he took the telescope from his eye, he uttered no sound. No smile of satisfaction could be traced on his pale and speaking features, which might give them room to hope in the fallacy of their alarm—no sneer of doubt or scepticism rebuked their credulity or cheered their doubt. Solemn, melancholy, and mysterious, the captain's features too plainly bespoke how much he shared in the general belief.

Once more his scrutiny was renewed. Still there remained The Flying Dutchman, with her dim, dark, vague hull, and her thin vapoury sails stretching every stitch of canvass to a close-reefed topsail gale, yet scarcely bowing even to that. Looking like nothing of this world upon the waters, and well sustaining the assertion made that night by many seamen, of her not having gradually hove in sight like any other vessel, but of her having sprung suddenly from the bosom of the deep, just where she was now seen to sail along so calmly ominous and chill.

"When was this sight first seen, Mr. Stephens?" at length demanded the captain.

"As near midnight as possible, sir."

"How did she bear then, sir?"

"Why, that all seemed to depend upon the spot where the observer stood."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Why, sir, when I stood on the quarter-deck, she seemed to bear upon the bow; when I looked at her from the waist, she seemed to be a-beam; but when I went forward on the forecastle, she had every appearance of being on our quarter."

"Strange!—but it's quite clear from her appearance what she is."

Every head was bent forward to catch her description.

"It is not an actual vessel, but the shadow of one in another part of the world, only thrown on the waters near us by some power of the laws of refraction, with which we are not yet sufficiently acquainted. Pipe all hands—ware ship—in all probability, as soon as we come round upon the other tack, the shadow will become lost to us. Where's the master?"

"Here, sir."

"Ware the ship, master."

"Ay, ay, sir! Boatswain's mate, all hands ware ship."

But there was little occasion to call in aid the boat-

swain's whistle. All hands were already there in waiting, and, in their anxiety to shun the frightful sight that had thus thrust itself upon them, were at their posts almost as soon as the order had quitted the lips of their captain. The words of command were as swiftly issued—up went the helm, off fell the brig's head, coursing wildly through the sparkling waste of dark blue waters; round swung the ponderous yards, and gradually the man-of-war brig came to upon the other or starboard tack.

Hereupon seizing his glass, and posting himself upon the poop, the captain now looked once more for THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

"I told you so, Mr Stephens, I told you so; your hobgoblin craft has parted company—she was but a mere shadow, and is to be seen no longer."

While the very words of triumph swelled proudly on his lips, that all his crew might hear, and at the very instant when they were about to gather fresh courage at the tidings of deliverance, a hundred arms were raised —a hundred voices shouted—

"There!"

Speechless with surprise, the too hasty captain turned to look, and still in the same position upon the starboard beam as he was lately beheld upon the larboard —clear and distinct to every eye upon the decks of the fated brig, was seen looming nearer, larger and more louring than ever, the hated form of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Stung by remorse, unknowing how to flee,
Or 'scape the dreadful spectre of the sea.

COWED, abashed, ashamed, at the positive contradiction thus speedily given to his positive assertion, the captain endeavoured, in his fixed, half angry, half timi

gaze through the resumed telescope, to hide the confusion of his recent mistake. He now saw that the momentary disappearance of the sea spectre was owing to her having followed the movements of the brig, and put up her helm to ware round likewise. By this means the end of her yards being presented to them, she became for a brief time lost to sight.

After many minutes' anxious gaze, and still more anxious debate in his own breast, as to what course he ought to pursue, he turned round to Stephens, who, as well as being officer of the first watch, was also senior lieutenant, and still standing at his back.

"Is it really possible then, Mr. Stephens, that that vessel to windward is what you told me?"

The lieutenant shook his head, and sighing deeply, fixed his eye on the dim pile of sails that seemed to mingle with the clouds, just bending over sufficiently to the powerful blast to give an air of substantiality to her crowd of sail, and render more unnatural and alarming the fact of her being able to carry it at all.

"I fear, Captain Robinson," said the lieutenant, "that I have not made the mistake you at first supposed. If there be any sort of truth in the legend which has been handed down through so many generations of seamen since seafaring has been a profession, depend on it, sir, what we have seen there is nothing more nor less than THE FLYING DUTCHMAN; and as she is always known to bring ill luck wherever she appears, it might not be amiss to consider what we had better do, or what danger may be threatening us."

A long pause followed this prudential piece of advice. The commander seemed to be struggling between his unwillingness to acknowledge in any shape the reality of the spirit-ship, and some conviction of duty that should lead him to prepare for the worst.

"I fear it really must be so!" at length pronounced the captain; "and yet it is inexpressibly horrible to think that the gostly tenants of the deep should be thus

given up again to sail its surface, and blast the eyes of honest seamen in the simple discharge of their duty."

"Perhaps, sir, it may be but a merciful dispensation allowed to us sailors, more than any other class of men. For anything we can tell, sir, that dread ship, if she is manned by spirits, as many suppose, may contain on board some of our old friends or shipmates, who merely show themselves to our eyes in kindness, to give warning of some approaching evil."

"Yet how should that be? What good can we derive from it? There she sails, and that's all we know of the matter. How can we guard against an evil of which we know nothing? We are on the high seas—no rocks nor shoals in our course—a good sound ship under us, and the brig made snug—what evils can we apprehend?"

"I don't know, sir, but some misfortune is always said to follow the falling in with that terrible sail to windward."

"It is indeed terrible!—horrible!—to see her there to windward, watching and eyeing us.—Something we must do to get away from her. Let us try the effect of making sail."

"Very well, sir, but I greatly fear we shall never get any canvass to stand."

"If we blow the masts out of her, we must try it, for this surveillance of the damned is too horrid to be borne any longer."

Once more through the decks of that dismayed ship was heard the pipe—the order—the command. With affrighted faces, whose pale looks of haste only the more deeply increased their mutual perplexities, the harassed seamen busied themselves in the vain attempt to elude their rapid foe. But as they remarked to one another, the effort to "fly from THE FLYING DUTCHMAN" seemed to their rude minds still nearer profaneness than it was to absurdity.

Wearied, worn, and despairing, the dreary hours of darkness stole on, and left them just where the ill-omened

midnight had found them. Again and again had the captain proceeded to wear ship, and still THE FLYING DUTCHMAN did the same. He then endeavoured to put the brig about, but she missed stays, and only bagged the more heavily to leeward. Still the awful phantom pursued them in all her panoply of mist and sail, chilling the very heart,s blood, and continuing to edge down closer and closer, as if to point out the unerring certainty with which some dreadful fate was about to overwhelm them.

Nor was the attempt to make sail more successful; topsail after topsail was blown out at a single blast from its bolt-ropes, and after shaking out the reefs they attempted to hoist the yards. Not even a single reef would the furious gale allow to them, while THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, with her royals and flying jib, cantered along as if her swift and flashing bow and lofty spars bore with them some magic spell with which to rule the waves, and to disarm the winds.

At length, when the Spider's jibboom, and the gaff of her fore and aft mainsail, had been carried away in a vain attempt to increase her speed, she, as a last hopeless resource, hauled on board her close-reefed forecourse, and bearing up, and scudding right before the gale, like one fleeing for life, tried if on this point of sailing, rather than the preceding one, she could beat her ghostly foe.

Fast and fiercely soared the vast waves behind the unhappy brig, like so many gigantic beasts coursing down their prey; and still the trim tight boat sprang from one foaming mass of water to another with an increasing swiftness, which less resembled the speed of inanimate matter, than that mad terror which the poor devoted hare displays when the relentless fangs of her pursuers are gaping wide for her destruction, and are almost fastened in her haunches.

No sooner did the Spider bear up, and thus unequivocally display the eager desire of her commander to

trust her safety to rapid flight, than round swept the high and threatening bow of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN; and like some all-potent magician displaying his exhaustless power upon his own element, the huge and vapoury pyramid of sail came swelling after the rolling, trembling brig, bearing a little on her larboard quarter, and darting along with as much ease and steadiness as if shooting down the Race of Portland, or through the Needles.

CHAPTER L.

"Fierce blows the blast, the fated bark bears on;
The day-dawn breaks, the midnight gloom is gone;
Still, as before, the hated phantom brings
Hell's wizard spells upon its mist-like wings."

"How does she go, Stephens?—does she gain at all' think you?" eagerly and mournfully demanded the captain of his first lieutenant, as they both stood on the poop of the brig, and the latter, with an almost hopeless anxiety, employed the glass upon THE FLYING DUTCHMAN's hull.

"I can hardly tell yet, sir. THE DUTCHMAN has only just borne up, but yet I think we have some hope. I don't know whether it's fancy or not, but to my mind I don't see her spars and rigging quite so plainly as I did."

"Let me have the glass—I havn't looked for some time. Yes, yes!—you are right, Stephens—We *are* dropping her, thank God! though slowly—at least I think so; and yet I don't know, for sometimes I think I see every stitch of her unnatural sails as plainly as I ever saw you. Then suddenly the whole seems to be melting off into the air—then again it grows dark and strong as ever. Merciful Heaven, if we might only be delivered from this nightmare of the sea!" and the perspiration rolled down the captain's forehead in drops of agony as he spoke.

"Now, Stephens," added he in a few seconds, resuming his scrutiny, "she appears distinct as ever. 'Tis terrible!—'tis horrible indeed! Is there *nothing* we can do to escape from her? I do believe, if this lasts much longer, I shall go stark raving mad!"

"There's only one thing that I know of, sir, to send us faster through the waters; but it is a desperate remedy."

"Desperate remedy!—Everything is desperate with us. For aught we can tell, neither the brig herself, nor living creatures aboard of her, may have half an hour more of life's glass to run. If it were flesh and blood we had to fight against, I should care nothing!—They should soon see as much pluck as a British man-of-war may show—small as we are. But who can fight against a spirit—a spectre—yes, if it must out—a devil?—No, no; nothing can be so desperate as that!—So if we can send the brig faster through the water, do it—cost what it may."

"Very well, sir; I merely meant to take out the masts' wedges, and saw a few of her beams through, that she might play a little to the gale; that, I think, would let her slip over these heavy seas fresher and lighter."

"True, it would, and lose not a second in doing it! Call the carpenter's crew to work immediately, and let them cut away every other beam below; and send the afterguard forward, to help the forecastlemen in heaving the bow gun overboard; that'll help the foresail to lift her more out of the water, and prevent her pitching in this manner, for now she threatens every five minutes to send her sticks over the bows."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the lieutenant, hurrying away to execute these commands; and the carpenters getting their saws and adzes, and the forecastlemen applying themselves to their allotted task, the brig was soon lightened of her foremost guns, and in a certain degree partially dismembered.

What with the swaying of the masts, now only held by the rigging, and the oscillatory motion of the ship itself as her severed and loosened parts actually swayed to and fro against each other like the limbs of some crazy drunkard, nothing could be more frightful, and in every sense of the word truly alarming, than the state to which she was reduced.

A single plank between man and the wave, between the soul and eternity, is at all times a matter of deep consideration, when the mind, rendered insensible by long habit, is forced by accident to recur to it. But here, when every step the seaman took upon his weakened bark made him feel as if she was momentarily about to sink into the profound depth of the unfathomable abyss, the nerves were strung to a degree of tension that nothing but such momentous horrors upon the brink of the grave—and that opened by no ordinary death—can effect.

In this case, these horrors were heightened by all the abject helplessness which supernatural terrors convey; and the strength and overwhelming potency of these may be conceived, when the hardy and daring seaman could resolutely prefer making his ship a wreck ready for the waves, rather than fall a victim to his demon pursuer.

"Your orders are obeyed, Captain Robinson," said the first lieutenant, returning to the poop, and addressing his superior in the tone of one who had resigned himself to the worst; "do we draw ahead much, do you think, sir, now?"

No answer was for some time made to this important question; and then, in a still more gloomy manner, the unhappy commander remarked—

"It is all over with us, Stephens—all over! I believe we did draw ahead at first, just after the sawing of the beams, and throwing the guns overboard, but suddenly The Dutchman seemed to observe this, and increased his speed."

"But how, sir, in the name of wonder, could he increase his speed?"

"That is a question too mysterious for me to answer. All I can say is, that he did it, and, directly I saw the effect, I gave up our fate for lost. As brave men we have struggled while we could, and now as brave men we must die."

"Amen, sir, since it must be so; though how that ship, having all her sails set before, could increase her speed at pleasure, I cannot make out."

"It's no use arguing about her actions as we would respecting any other craft."

"But did you see nothing done on board her, sir?"

"I thought I did, and yet I cannot swear to it."

"Why, what, did you see, sir?"

"I saw, or fancied I saw, her foresail suddenly become darker, and then I perceived that we no longer drew ahead; only, as you must well know, ever since she was first descried, her canvass has been continually varying and shading—now as black as the night, now scarcely to be seen."

"Yes, it has, sir. But was this all you saw?"

"Everything, and the only difference in her, is that dark as it then became, it has since remained."

"Well, sir, this is indeed a shocking mystery, when we, who have been at sea since children, should be thus at fault, and give up to a thing of mere mist and shadow."

"It is most horrible to think of, but it must be borne. Perhaps, if we can only live it out till morning breaks, the spectre may disappear. They say that spirits are startled by that hour."

"Pray Heaven it may prove so, sir!"

"Amen!—We will try, at any rate, to weather it till then; so go below, and see if the brig makes much water in the pump-room. Every now and then, as the seas surge up under her counter, I feel her planks and timbers quivering beneath us like the limbs of a sickly child."

Scarcely had the lieutenant departed to execute this command, when a wave, larger and more tumultuous than the rest, came roaring and rolling after the unhappy brig. The captain, who had his back turned towards it, was looking at the foretop. Ramsay, who, on the contrary, was looking aft, saw the danger, and cried to Captain Robinson,

"Hold on, sir! hold on, sir! we are pooped. Carpenters, clap tarpaulins on the gratings!"

But both cautions were equally vain. Scarcely had he time to steady himself by the gear of the rolling mainmast, when the vast volume of water struck on the stern of the Spider.

Like the cataract of some mighty river, on came the deep blue sheet of water—no casual spray or dash of sea, but a vast, powerful mass of fluid, beneath which the already weakened brig seemed unlikely ever to rise again.

"We're sinking! we're sinking!" was the frenzied cry instantaneously arose fore and aft, as if that startling sound had been necessary to increase the horrors of the hour. Down rushed the resistless volumes of water through the open hatchways, and for several minutes it seemed but too probable that such would, indeed, be the fate of the poor seamen. Slowly, and as if by a last effort, the brig gallantly recovered herself, and with lessened speed and lightness pursued her desperate and vain flight over mountain after mountain, as the agitated and dangerous sea bore her onward.

"Carpenters, batten down the hatchways! afterguard, rig the pumps!" cried the still unyielding captain, who, swept clean over the break of the poop, had only been saved from the horrors of being washed overboard by Ramsay's strong arm and coolness of mind.

When the order had been given to batten down the hatches, an ice-like chill came over Ramsay's heart. Throughout this dreadful night he had constantly borne to Angela the best news which he could render of the

gale above, saying nothing of their being chased by The Flying Dutchman, and endeavouring still further to lessen her fears by painting the Babel of sounds which reached her ears as the mere and usual results of a severe storm, of which she had before then witnessed too many to entertain anything more than a reasonable apprehension.

These duties discharged, he had always returned on deck to watch the progress of the chase. To a sailor, and in time of danger, no privation could be greater than that of being kept from the deck of the ship which bore him.

Now, however, when the Spider's hatches were to be closed, and tarpaulins nailed over them, he saw that the state of the ship was far too precarious to admit any reasonable hope that she would float much longer, if urged at her present speed before the wind. He, therefore, was compelled to choose between never again beholding the wife of his bosom, or remaining nailed down below to perish, without the possibilty of an effort to escape.

The last was hideous, but he did not hesitate. To die with her who had lived for him, was the least sacrifice he could make at such an hour. Voluntary bidding adieu to the heavens above him, he decended into the dark oppressive regions of the lower deck and steerage, thus at once resigning all hopes of ever again quitting them with life.

But this glorious consolation made bright even the gloom of the grave. He had ever lived as one soon to die. Whatever fate might overtake him, it would find him at the side of her who had the best claim on his devotion.

CHAPTER LI.

"Farewell to Hope, to pity—Love farewell—
All earthly aid, all heav'nly help denied,
What human courage can defy the fates ?"

Again and again did the heavy waves pour out the whole of their relentless wrath on the brig's stern, the hapless little vessel quivering under each stroke as it urged her through the sea, and swept along unchecked from stem to stern, not unfrequently washing off into the whirl of waters several poor fellows whom long exertion had rendered too weak to resist its matchless force.

The greater apprehension, however, of the brig's foundering was lessened when her battened hatches kept out the waves from filling the lower deck; still the water in the hole amounted to several feet in depth, and kept the pumps unceasingly at work.

But where was their fell, their most mysterious pursuer? There, upon the larboard quarter, exactly in the same spot which she held from the very moment when the brig first bore up, seemingly as unconcerned as if no single life was at stake, The Flying Dutchman still held on her course with a pertinacity which no evasion could tire, no speed outstrip.

At length the fatigued and worn-out seamen, in despair and indifference, flung themselves on the deck to die. Death to their unlettered minds, could not be nearly so terrihle as the last four hours of suffering, labour, and horror, and neither threats nor promises from their officers, any longer possessed the least influence to induce them to a furthur struggle against a fate which they believed inevitable.

As daylight began to glimmer faintly in the east, rather an indication than a begining of forthcoming day, they tore open one of the tarpaulins forward, and, creeping down upon the lower deck, broke into the

spirit-room, broached the rum, and giving full indulgence to the love of intoxication, added the frightful and loathsome scenes of inebriety to those which already marked the night.

Though self-possessed to the last point, and ever ready to die without a murmur when the hour approached, Ramsay, like other men of a high, refined, personal courage, was resolved that his last mortal enemy should never surprise the fortress one moment before the last minute for its capture arrived.

So soon as he heard by the songs and maudlin merriment without, what was passing among the crew, he left Angela alone for a short space, and locking the cabin, which the captain himself had given up to her, he sought the quarter-deck to report what he conceived to be a partial instance of insubornation. No sooner, however, had he gained the brig's deck than he perceived, at a single glance, to how great an extent he had been mistaken.

Whole groups of seamen lay stretched and helpless at every step, steeped to the last excess in the oblivion of intemperance, the water splashing over them at every motion of the ship, and the poor little Spider herself ploughing the waves, and plunging from crest to trough, almost unmanned, in point of meaning at least, if not of fact. The shreds of her shattered main-topsail streamed idly on the tempest in the gray light of increasing dawn, and the wreck of her gear flapped unheeded to and fro aloft, without hand to tend or to restrain it: the close-reefed foretopsail and forecourse alone remained to urge her forward on her course; while the captain and first lieutenant stood by the wheel, directing with their united strength the steering of the brig.

Many of the junior officers had been swept overboard, and the rest, despairing, faint, and overcome, lay on the deck in the stupor of approaching death, or the more lenient forgetfulness of sleep. Accustomed to strive

to the last, the melancholy of this scene appeared more lamentable to Ramsay than any that had preceded it.

With the last faint hope that the spectre ship would disappear with the returning beams of day, the captain and his lieutenant turned their worn and haggard countenances every now and then on their relentless chaser. Involuntarily Ramsay did the same. Still there she swept along—now descending swanlike into the retreating deeps,—now, with haughty rise of conquest, mounting to the blue wavetops that already began to sparkle in the renewed light of heaven.

The hopes of those who hoped till hope was vain, grew gradually more faint and dying in their hearts. Suddenly they beheld, as they had before thought, a darkening of the lower sails—and yet—could it be so? —yes—it was—it must be so.

"She gains on us, sir—she gains on us rapidly, Captain Robinson," cried the lieutenant to his superior.

"Ay, indeed does she, Stephens," replied the latter "hand over hand."

"Heaven have mercy on us! This is too horrible. in a few minutes she must be alongside. What shall we do?"

"Go down!" was the brief reply of the captain in deep and solemn accents, that seemed to be the knell of that doom he prophesied.

Rooted to the spot, Ramsay's eyes were fixed on the rapidly approaching phantom. A thousand thoughts rushed through his mind, but none distinct or clear. A thousand resolutions pressed upon him, but it seemed as if volition was no more a part of his nature, or rather, as he believed, some preternatural spell riveted his eyes to the ghostly craft and crew, more nearly and distinctly approaching him every instant.

Already had she drawn so near that he could plainly note her forecastle crowded with figures life-like in all but motion, and plainly distinguished by the costume of

the old Dutch sailor, with their red caps, large heads, and stiff long tails, as if blown out by the gale; while on the hammocks and netting, and supported by the larboard mizen shrouds, stood a tall, vast figure, wearing a three-cornered laced cock and long rapier sword, the chief of those midnight sailors on the deep—THE FLYING DUTCHMAN himself!

Not a point of her towering sails seemed out of place, not a spar carried away, while her huge hull looked more ominous and large from its outlines being partially lost in the indistinct haze of morning, with which the whole of it seemed to blend in colour, and indeed to form but a deeper, a more concentrated part.

As this terrific spectacle approached, a cold shudder crept over Ramsay's limbs, in defiance of his heart, while the latter, oppressed and labouring beneath the load of horror, sent forth its circling tides with slower beat and feebler pulse.

A cry from aft drew off his riveted gaze with momentary relief to the steerage-wheel, where Stephens, overcome with fear, had fainted; and the captain, weakened with the dreadful struggle of the past night, seemed unable to restrain the heavy motions of the tiller-ropes by himself.

Flying to his superior's assistance, his powerful aid once more gained command of the vessel; and when the eyes of Ramsay were again drawn, as if by fascination, on THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, she was already a-beam.

No motion, no life, could even then be distinguished among her stiff, quaint, and old-fashioned, but still ghostly crew. At length, without further sign of movement, a voice of thunder seemed to issue from the capacious chest of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN himself, and plainly distinct amid all the whistling of the wind were heard the words—

Brik Hoy.

To this startling hail no answer was returned.

Drops of horror rolled off the brow of the agitated but still determined captain, and fell fast upon his blanched and nearly palsied hands. But answer he made none—he was speechless.

Rasmay knew not this; and besides, being ignorant of the language in which the hail had been made, he concluded that his superior thought silence the wiser course.

Brik Hoy.

were the words THE FLYING DUTCHMAN again sent forth from his sonorous lungs, with an energy that chilled the very marrow of his hapless and helpless victim.

Still no answer was returned, and still the spectre-ship continued to draw quietly and calmly ahead of the labouring brig, the greatest contrast in order and condition perhaps the seas ever displayed; while a hollow, mournful sound, half wildly musical and horrible, seemed to sing, and scream, and mourn around her as she swept by with a mingled dirge, such as no one seaman on board that fated brig had heard but in the wildest tales of the betraying mermaids.

Again bellowed forth the Dutch hailer, as the phantom gained the larboard bow of the brig. Still no answer was returned, and once more the crushed hopes of Ramsay and the captain arose, to suggest to the weary mariners that, on gaining the extreme point of the Spider's bow, the whole hideous phantom might melt into thin air, or, as their tales of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN often told, vanish in smoke.

Merciful deliverance! Could they be right?—could they be safe? A vast cloud of smoke did arise. Yes, volume after volume poured itself forth, obscuring, hiding, the whole mass of their enemy from view. Their heartfelt thanks already trembled on their tongues, when the entire surface of the ocean seemed illumined by the sudden burst of day. Was it sunrise? alas, no! Crash came the shock and thunderbolts of war, and the

whole destructive broadside of the phantom frigate tore and hurtled through the raging air above their heads. Quickly the smoke rolled away, and discovered the disastrous sight of the brig's foremast shot clean away, just under the slings of the foremast, the whole mass of wreck hanging over her bows, and ploughing through the water; and, worse than all, distinct, lowering, and undisturbed as ever, the vast impalpable outline of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

CHAPTER LII.

Vain is the courage of the worldly wise,
That droops when man no more is looking on
He only is the hero who can bear
Death's grim companionship in solitude.

THE deed was done. The Spider rolled a wreck upon the waters, and her ghostly destroyer, seemingly content with the act of destruction, braced up and stood to windward, while the brig's helpless form drifted heavily away before the gale. To steer her now was idle, and Ramsay, feeling that he should no longer be deserting a post, returned below to await with Angela the foundering of the vessel.

Hour after hour slipped away, and still the brig survived. Do we ask how that interval of dread suspense was passed? Not in idle wailing, or a dread of death that paralysed the mind for meeting it with resignation. To the young and beautiful it is often indeed a "grisly shade," of unsurpassable horror, and many and bitter were the tears which Angela shed when first told that the sweet dream of youth and love was over. But the lips that conveyed this saddening truth were fully as able to paint more unalloyed happiness, in that state of the future, on which his own hopes had ever been based.

The brief interval of joy which had fallen to Ramsay's lot had been unexpected, and he had been so much

the greater gainer. With feelings of gratitude rather than complaint he now met the inevitable portion of mortality, thankful that it had been so long delayed, rather than repining that it had now arrived. By degrees his calm demeanour and convincing arguments infused into the mind of Angela no inconsiderable portion of that tranquillity which formed so strong a feature in his own.

Wearied as he well might be, sleep at length fell upon his eyelids, as he lay, his hand clasped in that of his young wife, and his head reposing on her pillow. Without their cabin reigned fear, dismay, abandonment of intellect and body, in many a revolting form; but the peace that no worldly possession can confer, and, what is still brighter for humanity, no temporal dangers can destroy, reigned triumphant in that little spot where death had already lost its sting, and the grave its victory.

Woman as she was, in every thought and feeling tender, shrinking, timid, and confiding, Angela thought not of the surrounding horrors, she heard not the groaning timbers, the sighing gale, the broken burst of inebriated revelry and irrepressible despair; she looked on the sleeping countenance of the husband that she loved, as the bold and resolved features, whose manly grace had so often riveted her fond gaze in weal and woe, now seemed mellowed and more winning than ever, from the air of languor and exhaustion which grief, care, and want of rest cast on them. A few days since, and how often in the early dawn had she looked on them as now, with no mortal eye to see her—but oh! not as now in any other point of view. Then, glowing with health's ruddy tint, the clear brown olive of that massive brow gave more joy to her throbbing heart than the sight of unbounded wealth could have afforded to the longing gaze of avarice or want. Now how pale, how resigned, how melancholy!

Slowly from eyes, whose loveliness was never yet surpassed, trickled the large bright tears of that fair and guileless watcher. With quivering lip she lightly kissed

those warm and hallowed drops away again, and prayed for him she loved; till, by giving this silent utterance to her grief, slumber stole kindly on herself, and, with her arms fast locked around him, she slept upon her husband's bosom.

In boyhood we pray and weep to die upon the field of fame; in youth and early manhood on the breast of one we love. In age, chill, experienced age,—ah, how do we ask to meet the tyrant then! an echo answers, "How?" —Come, however, when he may, happy are those whom he surprises calm, tranquil, and prepared as the pair we have just left. But to them his approach was not yet determined.

After sleeping for some hours, Ramsay was roused from his thrice-blessed slumbers, by a loud and reiterated knocking at the cabin door. Starting from the side of Angela, and quieting as far as possible her alarm, he gave himself a moment to collect his scattered thoughts, and then at once stepped forth upon the lower deck, and there before him stood the colossal figure of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN! Did he live?—did he breathe? Was this no sudden change or shift of those peaceful dreams that had so lately and delightfully filled his mind? Forgetful of his exact position, his hand glided involuntarily to his side, but it luckily found no sword. A shuddering, chilling sensation of horror came over him, as he endeavoured to press back from the supernatural object in his path.

"Do you not know me?" at length said a voice, something in a tone which seemed to find a strange familiar echo in his heart. "Is it possible that you, too, Mr. Ramsay, have been unable to penetrate this disguise?" And the tall figure in the Dutch dress, which had before been stooping beneath the low beams, held out his hand and grasped that of Ramsay in it. Removing with the other, at the same time, the laced cocked hat from his head, the partial and dim light of a suspended lantern fell upon the features of his old and faithful friend—*the corporal*.

At first sight, the lapse of time seemed to have produced little change in those rugged features; but a more close inspection showed to the observer the deep and burning furrows wrought by care and woe—sufferings the more deadly in their ravages, from working in a bosom whose flintiness of soul would not allow them other mark or show. It was long before Ramsay could persuade himself that he actually did gaze on his old shipmate the corporal; and even then, between incredulity and amazement, he remained speechless.

CHAPTER LIII.

Heaven to true heroism ever grants
That aid which cowards still implore in vain

The wind had considerably lessened as the sun sank towards the west, while, opposed to its bright rays, rose a large dense column of thick black smoke and lurid flame, now smouldering low beneath the still remaining force of the breeze, now darting up its forked tongue towards the heavens, as if rejoicing over its victim, the lately buoyant and graceful brig.

Where then were her crew? Every living soul was now to be found on board her pursuer, the relentless phantom, the dreadful spectre of the sea! In her feared and dreaded chief, the supposed Flying Dutchman, Ramsay had, as the reader already knows, discovered his old and attached shipmate, the corporal; and how he came to be placed in such a position will be most readily explained, by our tracing the career of himself and shipmates from the point where we left them, the conquest and concluded foundering of the Alcibiades.

After the mutineers had run foul of that frigate, and as suddenly parted from her in a mist, with the impression that she had sunk, the first duty of self-preservation led them to refit their shattered vessel, and, as far as

they could effect it, they renewed their efforts to relieve or take off Ramsay.

This, it is true, they did with greatly diminished hope, from the long lapse of time, and the belief that he must in all probability ere then have perished. There can be little doubt, however, that they would have found him, and effected their purpose, but for the fact of being so much at the mercy of the master, by the uncertainty, not only as to the situation of the isle in question, but even as to its very name.

Old Soundings, still obstinate in his belief that Ramsay was at the bottom of the mutiny, and that, by the mutineers placing him at their head, they would be likely to effect incredibly more mischief, and longer escape the punishment of their deeds by that recapture and execution which he was convinced must await them, not only stretched the privilege, which our conscientious brethren of the north sometimes adopt, of a little prevarication, but stoutly persisted in a downright "lie" of no inconsiderable magnitude.

Instead of giving them the name of the island on which Ramsay had been abandoned, he substituted that of another not far off, and on this they landed again and again—I need not add how vainly.

Convinced that their worst fears were realised by his destruction, or by his having been accidently taken off the island by some passing vessel, they were compelled —reluctantly enough it is true—to resign the hope of ever finding him, and to determine on the course they should adopt in this altered aspect of affairs.

The only officers who had escaped alive from the Alcibiades were three of the midshipmen, one lieutenant so severely wounded that he died within a week, the surgeon, his assistant, and the purser.

As soon as the cry, "We're sinking! we're sinking!" resounded along her bloody decks, "Sauve qui peut," was the only sentiment that prevailed on board.

The captain, the first and second lieutenants, the

master, the four senior midshipmen, and the boatswain, had all been killed, or were lying mortally wounded; and in this state also was one-fourth of her crew.

The command of the ship had devolved on the gunner and the senior midshipman; and gallantly they strove against their fate; galled by the degraded blow to their pride, of being overcome in an English frigate by a ship of the same size, though of what nation they hardly knew; while the fiercest passions of all on board had been additionally roused, by the deceitful trap into which they had been led at first, and the death of the boat's-crew alongside the stranger.

With these powerful incentives, no wonder they fought to the death. When, at length, the cry of foundering arose, discipline, weakened by the death of all the superior officers, at once gave way. Every being who could still crawl, rushed on board their late enemy, and the only soul left in the Alcibiades from any other reason than inability to leave her, was the heroic Angela.

Harshly indeed had her brother behaved to her. His arrogance and presumptuous interference had first raised the quarrel whose issue had proved so disastrous to her lover, whose fate had been kept an utter mystery to her. It was her brother also who had proved the ready and wretched tool of Captain Livingstone, in oppressing, to the last pitch of tyranny, him with whose welfare every wish of her heart was connected. Not a thought of all these cruelties practised against him was, or ever could be, absent from her mind; but still, when she saw her relation wounded and dying, it was not under such circumstances that any inducement could lead, any dangers drive her, from his side.

"The ship's sinking!—the ship's sinking!" was the cry that resounded through the decks; but she only pressed the hand of her mangled and speechless companion the closer as much as to say, "I am here to die with you."

Her servant Annette rushed to the lieutenant's cabin, and there on her knees implored the mistress whom she loved to leave the foundering frigate; but it was in vain: grasping the girl's hand, she bade her fly, and leave one to die, who possessed nothing in the world for which to live.

Again and again Annette renewed her entreaties, till she was suddenly snatched up in the arms of a strong and a handsome suitor, a young maintopman, who, being much more interested in the maid than the mistress, bore off the former beyond all reprieve, "seeing," as he said afterwards, "no sort of use in any more d——d nonsense."

CHAPTER LIV

Rebellion's teeth inflict no serious wounds,
Save when some master mind injects her fangs
With the quick poison of ability.

THE despair and misery produced on the corporal by the belief that the Alcibiades had foundered, I have already mentioned; and from that hour a change seemed wrought in his close, resolute, mysterious character, that none on board could fathom, though every one could see.

"What was Miss Livingstone to him? Could it be simply because she was Mr. Ramsay's sweetheart?" said the men to one another. No, that could not be the only reason why he grieved so at her death, for poor Mr. Ramsay was gone too. Some thought the corporal himself had felt a soft attachment in that quarter; but at this others laughed.

The stern, the iron-hearted corporal, over whose features no smile was ever seen to break the gloominess of settled sorrow!—No, that couldn't be it. The softer passions seemed a dead letter in the language of his bosom. Still the fact was not less visible.

Apart as he had ever kept himself from all the crew, save when he wished to mould them to his views, he gained nothing on their affections, it is true, but no man had such sway over their minds, for obedience and respect.

His unhesitating bravery all had witnessed,—his imperturbable calmness in danger,—the inexhaustible mine of his ingenuity, on which no emergency could make demands it was not fully adequate to supply,—all induced the men to regard him as one among, not of them,—a feeling heightened by their surprise at the sudden display of seamanship he had evinced in the long and deadly action so successfully brought to a close—seamanship that could never have been acquired by any attention or opportunites on board their own frigate, where he discharged the seemingly incompatible duties of a corporal of the marines: it must clearly have been gained in long years of toil, hardship, and danger.

Where had those passed? who had he been? Not a soul on board had ever heard him make a single allusion to any former ship, or indeed any former event of his long life

They all remembered his coming on board, and volunteering for the marines, before the ship left England, and his rising from the position of private to his present rank. But beyond this—beyond the strange union of the professions, soldier and sailor, in both of which he seemed equally skilled, they knew nothing.

His manners and habits, too, great as were the pains he took to disguise them, would occasionally break forth; and though the rude seamen knew not to what grade of the higher walks of life they might belong, this they saw plainly, that they were such as had never been acquired among themselves.

For all these reasons, it was to the corporal that the attention of the mutineers was turned when at last they found themselves compelled to elect some chief for

good, in the room of Mr. Ramsay, who was not to be found. Between the original mutineers, and the seamen of the Alcibiades, there existed at first all that hatred and ill-will that is inseparable from the feelings of the beaten towards their conquerers.

By degrees, as the rude joys of freedom and license were spread before their choice, many abandoned the title of prisoners for that of confederates; though some of the oldest and most considerate persisted in having nothing to do with the latter, the mutineers gained such an accession to their force as more than made up for the severe loss they had sustained in the late action.

Herbert had recovered from his wound, it is true, but at times his head became so much affected, that he no longer wished to retain command of the ship; and indeed it would have been mere idiocy in the mutineers to have trusted themselves to his guidance. Mustapha, however, and Cresswell still remained, of the delegates originally chosen to conduct the command, together with the corporal; but the latter had, since the sinking of the Alcibiades, scarcely seemed to interfere, or indeed to care much what course was pursued.

When, by the universal desire of the crew, all hands were summoned to elect a commander, the most general acclamation was decidedly for the corporal, who, plunged in some sad reverie, stood apart, seemingly unconscious of the contest going on.

In strong opposition of this choice and party were the volunteers of the crew of the Alcibiades. They naturally wished, in the first place, to have a man from among themselves, several of whom, foolishly ambitious of the fatal distinction, boldly stood forth as candidates.

In addition to this, they with equal readiness scouted the idea of being commanded by a marine; and not having been present, like their fellow mutineers, in that tremendous scene where all his vast energies and resources were proved to the utmost, they could only judge of him by the apathy he had displayed since their

coming on board, and the general improbability of one in his walk being able to discharge all the arduous duties their positions would naturally demand.

On hearing this doctrine broached, several competitors from either side started forward, declaring that they had only been kept back from the lists by a feeling that they had no claims on their shipmates to be compared with those of the corporal; but if he was to be set aside as a marine, they considered themselves quite as good as any man that could be picked out from the Alcibiades' crew and, what was more, that as the latter at most were but a minority, it was a piece of presumption that they should expect to appoint a captain to the whole.

The Alcibiades' men replied to this with equal warmth. Herbert, Mustapha, and Cresswell attempted to interfere in favour of the silent and abstracted corporal. Such loyalists as were at large, fomented the discord, hoping that, in the quarrel approaching, they should be restored to their country's service. A perfect Babel of angry voices already reigned upon the quarter-deck, and some of the most rash were even appealing, by speech and gesture, to the final argument of arms,—when the powerful and commanding form of the grim corporal dashed in among them, and rushing towards the capstan, exclaimed, in a voice whose thunder quelled every minor sound—

"Fools, all of you! Are you no better than knaves, traitors, or cowards, that you are ready to cut each other's throats for the possession of an empty vain title, that will most likely end in the hanging of the possessor? Are you no better than the beasts of the field, that you cannot settle this paltry question by the use of the reason that God has given you? I want no foolish captaincy or commandership. I am ready now, as I ever have been, to serve you in all, in any station where you may think my labours most valuable. I care not which it be—whether cook's mate sides-boy, waister

maintopman, or marine; and so must we all be ready to serve, if we ever wish to hang together in any better way than at the yardarm. Woe, I say, to the man whom we choose as our captain—his life will be one of the greatest trouble amongst us, and his death the most disgraceful!

"Is this the accursed post that any of you are asses enough to wish for?—if so, let such poor fool have it, I say. I want it not. That is the sensible feeling for each of us to have as single mutineers; but as a crew of united adventurers, pirates, cut-throats, or rebels—call us what you will—there is quite a different way of viewing the matter.

"Is not our object to choose that man amongst us who is most likely to keep us the longest time from the yardarm, and give us the most fun beforehand?"

"Ay, ay," joined the astonished and wavering seamen in one loud chorus.

"To be sure it is, shipmates," rejoined the corporal, "and this is the way we can manage it. Let us select twenty or thirty of the best hands amongst us, and send them all up into the foretop; place a couple of sentries with ball-cartridge in the rigging, and see that no one has any communication with them; and then we will draw lots who shall be called down from first to last, and let every one of them be examined before the whole of us, first of all in seamanship and pilotage for these seas, and next, as to what course he intends to pursue with the vessel and her crew, should he be chosen captain, and how he intends best to contribute to our security and pleasure.

"This will soon show us who is the man most fit to command the whole of us; as fast as they are examined, send them up into the mizentop out of the way again, and when it's all over, we'll every one of us show hands for the fittest captain. If any man thinks another fit to lead us, let him first give us his name, and some other hand repeat it, and then he shall be sent up into the

foretop, whether he likes it or no. But if any man choosing to volunteer cannot afterwards stand examination, he shall be cobbed by all. In this way, my lads, we shall do justice to ourselves, and wrong to nobody."

Loud and long-continued cheers followed this address, teeming with a knowledge of the world that was never yet learned amid the rude and simple circles of a man-of-war's lower deck.

The corporal, having given it, fell back abstracted as before; but his name was the first and most vehemently called of any, to become a candidate; and, obedient to the general voice he ascended to the foretop, though rather with the slow reluctance of one who questions the wisdom of putting himself forward in a troublesome duty, than an ambitious rebel bent on being the ringleader of his kind.

The clause which he so well and purposely introduced, to reserve a cobbing for the backs of vain and unsuccessful volunteers, considerably lessened the number of the candidates and the labour of the examiners; so that when all the former were collected together in the foretop, they amounted to no more than eleven, when, before the corporal's masterly address, an unconcerned spectator would have set them down at sixty for the fewest.

One by one of the eleven were called down at a time from the foretop to the quarter-deck, where, instead of the late fierce and furious feelings, they had all been laughing and jesting together in the utmost good humour. There each man was in turn placed upon the capstan, so that he might be conspicuous and audible to every one; while his examiners, the oldest seamen in the ship, sat upon the grating of the quarter-deck skylight abaft, and, with as much gravity and precision as if they had been post-captains, interrogated the candidate. The crew of the mutineers, disposed around the quarter-deck of the frigate, listened to the examination, as it proceeded, with the profound attention of a jury on whose

shoulders the honour weighed with equal importance, from the novelty of its possession and the serious personal consequences that depended on their right decision.

Whenever, by general consent, the examination of one candidate was concluded, no remarks were made on his replies, but he was despatched into the adjacent mizen-top, and his successor called down by lot from the more distant foretop, where it is hardly necessary to add, that not a syllable of either question or answer could be heard of the inquiry proceeding astern.

It was indeed a solemn and singular scene to mark those now lawless men—fearing nothing, caring for nothing, hoping nothing, but the pleasures of license and violence, led by the superior intellect of one man, and suddenly reclaimed, by that natural and ever-commanding magic, from the last excess of anarchy to the first exercises of reason and order.

CHAPTER LV.

Let those who shape the dagger's edge beware.—Scott.

Wild and various indeed were the projects that day broached among the mutineers. In matters of seamanship, nearly all the candidates acquitted themselves very fairly. The pilotage "for those seas" was, it is true, rather a more difficult matter, and in this most of them were deficient, and several utterly ignorant, and even their examiners were not very brightly skilled; but when each man came in full divan to proclaim his plans for the future guidance of the mutineers as a banded body, the mass of absurdity and cruelty proposed was almost beyond what it is possible to believe. Violence and bloodshed of the wildest sort were mixed up with these in every part—redeemed, if such a term may be employed, only by the grossest enjoyments, and an utter insensibility to danger, rather than a pervention of of it; while the motto, "A short life and a merry one,"

seemed to be the only maxim on which all their calculations were based.

Nine of the candidates had already been examined before the same lot fell upon the corporal. At last his name was called out, and leaving only one behind him, he walked aft to the quarter-deck, to submit to the ordeal he had himself proposed. The whole of his brother aspirants—though this he could scarcely be termed—were seamen, and the fact of his being a marine, and this having met with such strong objection, redoubled of course the eagerness of all parties to hear how he would acquit himself. His friends were, of course, most anxious—his enemies, if possible, still more so; while those who had preceded him were the most anxious of all,—being all of them more or less tinged with the folly, natural enough as it was, of coveting in secret the idle and dangerous honour for which they competed.

With a readiness that astonished all and confounded many, the corporal answered the most intricate and difficult questions of seamanship that the silver-haired veterans around could put to him. His pilotage and knowledge of the tropics scarcely less surprised them, and was clearly far in advance of that which any of the others had displayed. Finally, he came to disclose the policy which, if elected captain, he should adopt for the guidance and security of the whole.

After premising that their object in their late rising had been to free themselves, and rescue a deservedly beloved officer from a cruel death, he went on to remark, that the point which they should now next seek to attain, was the utmost degree of happiness that could be compatible with their safety and continued existence.

In the pursuit and enjoyment of these ends, he artfully pointed out to the crew those mere positively pleasures which he knew would most attract sailors, and then went on to deprecate their involving themselves in any unnecessary violence and cruelty. That any positive

enjoyment should or could be found in the mere shedding of blood, or otherwise maltreating such prisoners as might fall into their hands, he denied; and that such steps he, as captain, should consider the greatest offence against the fraternity, and punish with death; asserting, that the less cruel they could continue to be, the greater length of time would elapse before any serious attempt would be made by government to crush them; adding, that, if they adopted his advice, they would in all probability ere that time be so strong as to make a very sufficient defence against any attacks.

In explanation of this bold assertion, he then proposed that they should sail to the southern seas, and taking possession of some island well calculated for defence in case of extremity, and subsisting in from the plentiful nature of its products, proceed at once to colonise it as their own; enjoying life to the utmost in their power, and binding themselves by a set of laws adopted by universal consent, and imposed on all by universal authority.

"There," said he, "we shall always be able to leave our wounded in the care of a good surgeon, and enjoying all the benefits of being ashore. There we shall also be able to get rid of our present prisoners, without inflicting on them any cruelty beyond the mere restraint necessary to our safety. Instead of those cold-blooded butcheries of walking the plank, or cutting throats, which have been so common in these seas, and heretofore practised when any pirate vessel had captured a prize, all we have to do is to enlist the volunteers with us, and those who are obstinate may be made at the island to work on the forts, or the roads, or any other work we may be undertaking.—So much for the men.

"For any female passengers that may fall to our good fortunes, we all want wives, and they must be regularly wooed and won, without either violence or compulsion, as women always should be, and no doubt they will make the better wives for being so. On the other hand,

in such a little kingdom as I am proposing to found our children will, of course, become to us our greatest wealth; for it is only by our numbers we can hope for any ultimate power to resist attacks. I propose therefore, that we adopt, in one respect, the laws of some eastern nations, and admit of a plurality of wives—say six."

Here the corporal's detail of his new Atlantis was interrupted by a burst of applause and hilarity that seemed to carry all his auditors by storm. At last, when the cheers had in some measure subsided, he proceeded in a stern tone—

"But falsehood to one another in this matter shall be punished with death to both offenders. All artisans whom we may capture, shall be made to exercise their various trades amongst us, and we will try if it be not possible, away from the tyrannical reach of an overgrown and over-refined community, to live in one where the laws shall be framed as much for the separate happiness of each man as the preservation of the whole.

"Of one thing I must caution you:—if you elect me to be your captain, you shall make and confirm all your own rules—all your own laws; but when once you have agreed to these, and placed them in my hands to execute, there shall be no evaders. To the very letter of them all you shall each of you obey, though it matter only the paring of a quid of 'bacco, or the taking the best life among you; for of this I warn you most solemnly, if you ever intend to do any good, or ever hold together so as to escape the punishment of those prejudices we have all defied past any sort of forgiveness, it is only to be done by our putting shoulder to shoulder, and resolutely sticking to the observance of those rules on which we have once determined, whoever may offend or suffer by them.

"And now I have only one proposal more to make to you. The course of life which I have suggested holds forth many pleasures and advantages, but it is one also that may draw on it many dangers.

"We cannot expect to cruise long in these or any other seas, capturing whatever we may think worth the taking, and defying both all force and all nations, without raising many foes, which, I must not conceal from you, are likely to crush us at last. This end, however, I think we should ward off considerably, if we could so cloak our attacks as to leave no trace of them, or cause them to be set down as the deeds of others.

"This is a difficult business, I know, but I think I have hit on a plan."

"Let's hear it!"

"Ay, let's hear it!"

"You shall, my boys! but don't be surprised or downhearted at what I'm going to propose. It isn't any everyday plan that would suit our strait; and if you only give your consent, and promise obedience, I'll undertake the trick shall answer."

At this part of the corporal's address his listeners all bent forward with more anxious ears, and the speaker, after eyeing his auditors in silence for a few minutes, added, inquiringly—

"You have all heard of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, I suppose?"

At the sound of this dreaded name a visible dejection was seen to come over the countenances of many of the older seamen, accompanied with a sort of nervous emotion, tempting them to look over the shoulders, as if at some suspicious visitant, of whose absence or presence they were not quite assured. A few minutes' silence intervened, and then low murmurs of "Yes," "Ay, bo," "What then, corporal?" reached the speaker's ear.

He saw that he was treading upon tender ground, and proceeded as cautiously as possible.

"Well, shipmates, as you have all heard of this same ship which has appeared at so many various times, and under such different circumstances, you must all know the general belief to be, that whenever she heaves in

sight, some impending disaster of wreck or other matter is coming upon the vessel and the crew by which she is seen.

"Now, this being the case, you must also know very well that any ship whose crew are possessed with such a notion, and stand in dread of such a fate, are already half conquered, whoever their enemies may be. The notion, however, that the ship bodes ill luck, is as great a mistake——"

"Gently, corporal, gently!"

"Mind your stops!"

"Yes, yes, so I will; but hear me out patiently. I say that the notion of her boding ill luck is as great a mistake as the belief that THE FLYING DUTCHMAN is a ship at all."

Here the hubbub became so great, that for some time the bold declaimer was silenced; at last, however, by perseverance, he obtained a sufficient hearing to proceed with his theory.

"I say, then, my boys, that those captains, and admirals, and other great men,"—(Jack would have treated any men of science without these titles as mere humbugs and mad impostors,)—"great men who have gone deepest into this subject, have assured us that what we think is a ship, and what looks so like one, is in reality, only the reflection of some vessel in a calmer sea, and therefore carrying more sail than could be spread in those gales where the spectre ship is generally seen. What I propose, therefore, is this, that we take advantage of this superstitious legend, and the panic and fear that its appearance generally creates, and take the name and pass ourselves off in every respect as THE FLYING DUTCHMAN!'

Cries of—

"Shame! shame!"

"Bravo!"

"'Vast heaving!"

"Go on!"

"Hold hard!"

Many other of the accompaniments of popular speaking here interrupted the orator; but, amidst all the rout, the daring project clearly gained ground in the minds of its hearers, and after no inconsiderable squabble amongst the examiners, the examinee was at last requested to explain how, in case of the crew's consent, he proposed to carry his bold deceit into effect, and sustain the awe-inspiring illusion.

CHAPTER LVI.

> See to what mighty ends small means conduce,
> As spider's webs may heal the deepest wounds.

When once the corporal had contrived, by his courage and address, to gain the difficult point of fair hearing, the remainder of his task was of a nature comparatively easy. The present *dénouement* had been long contemplated, and allowance made for every emergency which can, as it were, be met in the distance.

The means therefore, by which he hoped to counterfeit the dreaded phantom of the sea, was this: he proposed to form an entire set of skeleton sails, composed of tolerably thick net-work, growing more and more slight in material and proportion as it ascended, and which, while it would give to the distant spectator the appearance of canvass, would yet still more alarm by seeming to be canvass of a most mysterious transparency, and on which the wind would have comparatively little power.

In addition to this stratagem, he advised the mutineers to carry very taunt slim topgallant and royal masts; and to guard against their being carried away very easily, he showed how they should be bound diagonally with sheet copper. Besides the skeleton sails of net-work, his plan also embraced the power to carry the actual sail upon the yards, to be used, when necessary, inside the net-work. He proposed also that the crew

should be dressed as much as possible in the Dutch style, and more especially so the captain.

When these details were propounded, with a variety of minutiæ not necessary here to repeat, but all tending to further the contemplated deception, the crew received the whole with three loud cheers, accompanied, it is true, by some slight and superstitious twinges of compunction, but these were silent in the general joy; and the corporal, dismissed by his examiners, passed up to the mizen-top, to be succeeded by the last of the eleven.

This latter gentleman was a solitary volunteer, and, being speedily found wanting, was told to console himself in the best way he could for the cobbing in store for him.

When the election came to be made, each name was called out in order of the examination, and those who voted for the individual to command them held up their hands. The process soon terminated in favour of the corporal by a large majority.

His scheme was now readily put into execution. They sailed for the South Seas first, terrifying and then taking on the way several ships of many nations, loaded with merchandise and passengers; and having discovered such an island as suited their purpose, it was named Flying Dutchman's Isle. The frigate herself was re-christened by the title of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN; and the corporal by that of Mynheer Hoogan Moogan.

Well fortified by nature, Dutchman's Island required little at the hands of its new possessors, but the moderate industry of providing themselves with houses, and the assistance of the plentiful earth to bring forth such crops as they were particularly desirous to possess and cultivate.

Having first, like the Sabines, procured wives, by the capture of all whom they met and ventured to engage, (for it was a standing rule with the corporal never to let go, when once attacked,) their next object was to increase the effective force of their illegal confederacy

and with many temptations, which in their wild romantic tales, they held out *ad captandum*, they seldom had to ask twice of their prisoners to become their comrades.

After a short but successful career, they now found themselves accidently possessed of Ramsay, by the attack which they had made upon the Spider, well knowing her inability to resist them, and thinking that they should gain some desirable recruits from her crew.

As soon therefore, as the wind had sufficiently abated, THE FLYING DUTCHMAN had hoisted out her boats, and, taking possession of the brig, transferred every living thing to her own decks, with all such marine stores as they desired; finally setting the hull on fire.

The superstitious horror of the officers rapidly changed into surprise and rage, when they learned how mortal had been those foes, who for such a length of time had, by their appearance, filled themselves with the dismay of a spiritual enemy.

But the discovery came too late. They soon found they must submit, and ere three days had passed, four-fifths of their crew were sworn to the creed of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

After a most productive cruise, the results of which were all on board, in money, provisions, stores, merchandize, and nearly five hundred men, besides twice as many more left on the island, they were now wending their way back to the Dutchman's Isle, full of high hopes on the subject of their pleasures, and all overflowing with the most boisterous delight at the pleasant recreation in store.

When the corporal had detailed to Ramsay at full length the events which have here only been generally narrated, he concluded by proposing at once to resign to him that command which he, Ramsay, had been originally appointed, and which the difficulty of discovering him had alone delayed.

CHAPTER LVII.

The strongest minds may tamper with and tempt
Their fate too long, and learn the truth too late.

Half an hour had scarcely elapsed since the corporal had recited to Ramsay the details of all the circumstances which had occurred on board The Flying Dutchman since the death of Captain Livingstone, and already it was known that the command of the mutineers had been offered to and refused by their old officer—the long sought and tardily discovered maroon.

What could he mean by refusing such a post? All of them discussed what none of them could know. But, on board a ship, the nine days' wonder of the shore dwindles into the topic of scarcely more than as many minutes. They had already, on numerous occasions, fully proved the wisdom of their first choice, the corporal—Mynheer, as they jocularly styled him—and soon ceased to think that they could in any way be the gainers by transferring the command into any other hands. True, he was severe and moody, distant and unhappy; but success seemed to await on all he undertook, and that success was invariably made to conduce to their enjoyment. They asked no more.

Many of them—the idle portion—endeavoured to rebel against his impartial, fearless execution of those summary laws themselves had framed; but with a touch of the adamantine vigour of Aurelian—undaunted, and not to be turned back—he had acquired an ascendency over them, which all their efforts and insubordination only tended to root the firmer.

Brief as his reign had been, many plots had been formed against him during its short existence; but these were, for the most part, momentarily struck out, under the influence of some of his terrible administrations of even-handed justice; so that, ere they came to a head the older seamen, perceiving, with an intuitive wisdom, that no other successor could be found to keep their

jarring band together if he should be cut off, generally contrived to give him notice of what was hatching.

Whenever the hand of the conspirator was levelled solely at his life, he freely forgave his intended murderer; but once, in the most formidable of these combinations, when the designs of the intriguers had been levelled rather at the existence of the confederacy *in toto* than himself especially, he caused eighteen of his subjects to be tried by their fellows, and being found guilty of treason, he, without asking a further opinion, had them all drawn up upon the strand, and shot, within twenty minutes after passing of their doom.

Three men also he had slain with his own hand, in different attempts made upon his person; and now he stalked a lonely thing, apart from all—a mystery none could fathom—having no pleasure in the rude and sensual enjoyment of his crew, and seemingly without any other object in life than to descend, *reluctantem draconem*, to the grave—heeding not how sadly his life was passed, so long as he was master of himself, and free.

With all this untameable obduracy of purpose, still the crew loved while they feared him. It is true they had made him chief, and he was determined the rule should neither be wrested from nor diminished in his hands. Still his unsurpassable bravery, his truth of purpose, and frugality, won upon their hardy hearts.

He took no man's store—he sought to entice away no man's intended bride. He interfered in none of those petty meannesses in which a ruler is so often involved in hatred and contempt. None ever appealed to him in a just cause in vain. None ever dared to shrink from his duty; but that done, he never wished to make them feel less free and unfettered than himself.

Mentally and bodily, they saw in their "skipper" one whom nature had made their superior; and however envy might prompt, neither detraction nor rebellion could drag him from that indestructible elevation. Gradually they prepared to submit.

Their disappointment, therefore, at Ramsay's having refused the dangerous and questionable honour they had once sought to confer on him, was speedily forgotten.

The late crew of the Spider, recovered from the abject state of intoxication into which they had allowed their fears to drive them, were now the objects of the mutineer's seductive tales and most persuasive hospitalities, and in songs and merriment of every description which the watchful discipline of Myneer permitted, they were passing the third night of their voyage home. Even the dark and hopeless countenance of Mynheer seemed to be most unaccountably touched with some latent joy, since the recovery of Ramsay and his bride, to whom the dreaded chief showed all the gentleness that was in his nature.

The lights had been long extinguished on the decks of the Flying Dutchman, but this was no check to the mirth of the crew; they assembled in groups, according to the sudden friendships they had formed with their new comrades, and the laugh, song, and joke went round, and gathering on the forecastle with such of their wives as they had brought to sea, they gave way to the exuberance of their spirits in the dance.

It was well, perhaps, for the mutineers, that all was cheerfulness and mirth within their ship; for far different was the scene without, upon the sullen waste of the unbounded seas. The late gale had, it is true, blown itself out, and a dubious hazy state of the atmosphere had succeeded. On this evening in particular, a uniform canopy of dun-gray clouds, slightly mottled at intervals, hung low over the sea. The long heavy swell of the mighty ocean rolled surgingly under the bright copper of the frigate, but little or no wind played upon its surface, to fill the large sails which, now set in reality and absence of all trick, were intended to waft the pirates to their eagerly-desired home—those thoughtless men who had steeped themselves in so many crimes to obtain its unlawful pleasures!

In the western quarter of the obscure heavens a lead-like radiation of the departed sun still lingered with a vividness and duration rarely or ever seen within the tropics; while, in the east, the moon, which had scarcely gained the zenith of the heavens, glowered with a dull red misty glare through the intervening haze, showing more distinctly a long black bank of clouds, that hung suspended half-way betwixt herself and the horizon, while a ray or two of bright light, escaping beyond all, fell in intense spots upon the dismal horizon, and rendered the shade still deeper and more drear.

Had such a sky but topped some blasted heath, there had been the very scene of Macbeth's witches; and the gloomy supernatural appearance of the hour was not lessened by its louring upon a limitless expanse of dark and restless water, rolling in vast surges with a slow and solemn motion, and showing to the eye a wild and sluggish surface, broken in its sterner aspect only where a streak of dim light was for a moment caught, reflected, and lost again.

The breeze seemed gradually to be dying more and more away; the large sails flapped heavily every now and then upon the groaning masts, and at intervals a low unearthly moaning came over the weary stretch of ocean, as it heaved its troubled breast around them, and sighed to the night air.

Of all the hundreds on board, Ramsay alone was musing on the ominous aspect of the night, and thinking in his own mind it was just such weather as, with "portents strange and terrible, perplexes monarchs with the fear of change."

CHAPTER LVIII.

What! have we trifled with the tomb till Death
Sends forth its grizly pursuivants to seize
The contumacious rebels to his crown?—WERTHER

WHILE plunged in these sombre reveries, one of the Flying Dutchman's look-outs cried—"A sail on the weather beam!"

The officer of the first watch was young Herbert, the nephew of the maintopman, whom the latter had saved at the risk of his own life. Seizing his glass at the word, he directed it on the distant object, which now catching one of the partial rays of the moon, shot forth beneath the dark and superincumbent bank of cloud, with a strange and silvery freshness that rendered every part of her form distinct, though not less than five or six miles off.

"By Jove here comes a regular heavy squall!" cried the young seaman, as he examined the stranger—"a noble frigate, under close-reefed fore and maintopsails, scudding before it! We must shorten sail quickly, or we shall be on our beam-ends in a crack. For a thousand doubloons she brings the gale down with her, Hawkins," (turning to the mate,) "do you take charge of the deck, while I run down and call Mynheer. In the mean while pipe all hands and shorten sail."

With these words down jumped young Herbert to the deck below. The hands were called, and at their post, when the corporal rushed on deck, followed by young Herbert at his heel.

"By all that's sharp," cried the latter, when they gained the gangway, "how rapidly she bears down before north-easter! When I left the deck, she was at least five miles distant."

"You must be wrong," said Mynheer; now she is scarcely three miles off."

"I see it; but she certainly seemed half as far distant again just now. It is very strange."

"You must mistake. But this is a regular tornado. I only wonder how she stands under her topsails, close reefed though they are! At any rate we must look sharp." Then turning away, and addressing himself to the crew at their posts—"Stand by to shorten sail. Man the fore and main clue-garnets, spanker, brails, and jib down haul! Hands by the fore and main tacks and sheets, spanker out haul, jib and topsails haul-

yards. Let go—clew up—haul down. Lower away the topsails!"

Swift as the word away ran the men on the frigate's deck with the heavy-measured tramp of a well-diciplined crew—the heavy folds of the fore and main courses, swung up in broad sweeping lines to the yards, scarcely disturbed by a passing breeze.

The topsails, not pressed by the wind, fell lightly on their several caps; the spanker was brailed up, the jib hauled down. The frigate in dead silence, and her crew in breathless anxiety and observation, waited the outpouring of the tempest, happy that they had been granted time sufficient to get ready for its dangers.

With a degree of inconceivable rapidity, that conveyed a feeling of unaccountable horror to all on deck, the stranger came flying onwards, her bright sparkling speck of sails bellying and bulging out before the expansive breath of the tornado. Already she was within half a mile, plunging and ploughing up the hitherto sluggish waves with the greatest fury.

She's got her topgallant masts sent on deck, whether or no," said one of the crew aloud.

"It's very odd," quoth another, "that the sea doesn't seem more set up by the gale behind her—travelling after her, as it may be. You don't see as much as a white wakeline were she's past; and the same with the sea—'tis as calm and smooth as ever!"

"So it is, my boy, though I can't say I like the looks of it, and the same on either side."

"Ay, d'ye see, my fine fellow, too," said a third, "she's run down these four or five miles to leeward on us faster than any mortal ship ever did yet."

"I was just thinking on that."

"What, if she should be the——"

"Silence there, fore and aft, all of you," cried the corporal in his deep, energetic tones, crushing at once the furthur progress of a debate, which was perhaps the less desirable from finding somewhat of a strongly corroborative voice in his own bosom.

What could this ship be?—was there, then, really some phantasm of the sea—some mysterious spirit, or, more probably, some unexplained natural phenomenon that played upon the senses? An icy shudder crept through his frame as he gazed on that singular sight before him, and for a moment he had a faint experience of the dark, thrilling emotions he had so often caused in the hearts of others.

Still more felt the crew. Though the corporal's authoritative command had suppressed the loud and hesitating voice, the mysterious murmur, the vague hint, the dark alarm only circulated the more rapidly; and ere a few minutes had passed, the dark suspicions of the stranger's doubtful character had circulated amongst every seaman on deck.

But brief, indeed, was the time given them for debate. On the approaching vessel flew. Still not a breath of wind heavier than the catspaws playing around lifted the heavy and pendent canvass of the frigate. Still on came the swiftly-driven stranger, beneath the seeming hurricane.

Her masts bending like so many whips to the gale, her lee rigging was hanging in large bights, her crew were flying about as if in the wildest delusion of fear, and strange cries of suffering, confusion, despair, seemed to fill the air, and herald her rapid flight. Still the whole sea behind and around, as well as before her, was smooth and unruffled as ever.

The mutineers looked at the flying spectacle in undisguised, unmitigated horror. It was now their turn to feel the keen, unsparing pangs of superstitious dread, augmented by the deepest remorse, and all the poignancy that a consciousness of crime can inflict.

"Why, how that craft steers!" cried the corporal, himself stirred up to the deepest excitement as he beheld the swift and suspicious stranger steering right for his gangway.

"Hawkins, quick for your life, a port fire! Mizen-

topmen, cast loose the aftermost quarterdeck gun. Quartermaster, up with helm—hard up, a' weather with it! Does she answer her rudder?—No, by Jove That ship will certainly run us down. Ship, a-hoy. port your helm—hard-a-port, I say, or you'll run us down. Port, I say, with your helm, or we'll fire into you! Does she see us? What does this mean? Pipe to quarters. Man the larboard broadside on the main-deck. Port, I say, you fools there. Hawkins! Herbert! where's the port fire? Quick! cast loose the gun—so—fire?"

As these words left the corporal's lips, he applied the match to the touchhole of the aftermost quarter-deck gun, and fired directly into the bow of the suspicious stranger, who, without deviating a line from her course, or taking other notice of the hostile act, bore rushing onwards, under the whole influence of the gale she brought down with her, right for the gangway of the mutineers' ship, which lay like a helpless log in the path of this sea-tigress.

A loud shriek arose from the becalmed and devoted frigate, as her enemy came on, now within such few yards that the horrid foam torn up by her plunging bow, and the faces of her crew thronging on her forecastle, became painfully distinct. Momentary destruction awaited them—when lo! the bowsprit of the stranger had no sooner projected over the decks of the frigate than it melted into thin air. No sound was heard of all the rushing waters she seemed to turn up with her bow, and at the very instant when the two ships, meeting, were expected to clash with a force that should send the passive one to the bottom, not the least sensation of any shock was experienced, but the stranger melted away as her bowsprit had done, and so passed on, sails and all, until it came to the stern, and vanished too, appearing as quickly, however, to leeward of the frigate, as if the strange ship had passed clean through her; and, after dashing and scudding away some twenty yards,

a sudden blast appeared to throw her on her beam-ends,—a piercing shriek arose on the night air, and hull and masts quickly foundering, she suddenly sank from view —a hundred fathoms down in the dark and stormy deep.

Yet there lay the mutineers' ship, calm as if in a mill-pond—not a point, nor a gasket of her sails even lifted by a breath.

Firm and unyielding as the corporal was, the cold and dewy perspiration stood upon his brow like rain. He looked round for his crew, and they had fled; every man had deserted the deck in horror, save the officer of the watch, who, port-fire in hand, still stood near, speechless with dismay, and pallid as a tenant of the grave. Unconscious almost that he was thinking aloud, he at length slowly muttered, "What can this be?"

A deep groan bursting from the bosom of young Herbert, told him that he had heard the question, and looking on the corporal with unutterable horror, he gasped forth, "THE FLYING DUTCHMAN in *reality*."

CHAPTER LIX.

"We have no home, we have no friends,
They said our home no more was ours;
The cottage where the palm-tree bends,
The garden we had filled with flowers."

FISHER'S SCRAP BOOK.

DAY dawned at length, but its cheerful beams brought with it no spell to rouse the mutineers from the trance of terror into which the scene of the last night had plunged them.

They were completely cowed—if possible, even more so than the crew of the Spider had been; for they could not help considering the appearance of what they termed the real Flying Dutchman as a sort of judgment sent upon them, for daring to personate that unearthly phantom, and as boding the direst misfortunes to them-

selves—a fact, the truth of which they saw plainly shadowed forth, in the sudden foundering of the unreal ship seen the night before.

In vain the corporal stormed or reasoned; he saw his authority on a more dangerous precipice than ever before threatened to engulf it. They would listen to no explanation of this mystery on the basis of any philoso phical theories; and secretly had the usual ingratitude of the many blamed him as the author of their late horror and their coming calamities; forgetful that but for his superior genius and abilities they would long since have been scattered to the four winds of heaven, and made to expiate their offences by a violent and shameful death.

Cursing the day on which he undertook to guide or serve such companions, he felt thankful that their cruise was at its end; and trusting that a few weeks on shore would resettle their perturbed fancies, he contented himself with seeing that the ship's duties were not neglected, and urging the frigate on her course towards home.

Again he offered the command to Ramsay, and again it was refused. In the strongest colours he could use, the corporal painted the danger that awaited our hero—proscribed at home from some unknown charge that affected his life—disgraced in his own service, and the mark of every tyranny—surely if ever man had cause to cast off the trammels of a society by which he had been deeply injured, Ramsay was that man. But to this he would not listen; he preferred remaining a prisoner; and however the corporal might feel surprised at his decision, he knew that it was at least from no want of spirit; and therefore, giving up the point in despair, he contented himself with showing to his old friend as much kindness in other matters as lay in his power.

Once more the breeze sprang up. The frigate bounded on as if no check had been given to her career, but the spirits of her crew had vanished—a deep fore-

boding gloom had settled in their place, and nothing could be more opposed, than the ship before her meeting with that which they considered to be the late apparition, and afterwards.

Once more they drew near Dutchman's Isle, and with the earliest light of the next day would behold its distant land. That night hope once more seemed to return to them. Anxiously the look-out on the following morning watched from the mastheads for the wished-for land.

Day broke—what did they see? In yonder quarter lay the desired land, and before it cruised four or five frigates, and two seventy-fours, from the peaks of all of which proudly floated the blue ensign of Britannia. Their eagerly-desired and long-anticipated home was now beleaguered and surrounded, and—could it be possible?—themselves undone!

Slow were they to believe the truth of that which they now feared. But, fearful as it was, it came home to them at last. Long they cruised cautiously around, watching the movements of the blockaders of their isle, and when convinced of the truth, they put about their ship's head, for fear of being discovered, and paused to consult what had better be their line of conduct.

CHAPTER LX.

"That wedlock's divine may be all very fine
To those who've their happiness handy;
But such wedlock as mine is on gruel to dine,
Or a sneaker of punch without brandy."

JOCK JABER'S LAMENT.

FOR a while we leave the crew of the Flying Dutchman to track out such a line of conduct as might yet remain for safety,—if any, at this disastrous hour, could conduce to that much desired point.

During their fearful deliberations, and the results which followed them, the developement of our story

demands that we should place before the reader the position of events on shore, and detail the circumstance and first appearance of the hostile and blockading force, the sudden appearance of which struck, as we have seen, such terror into the mutineers afloat.

We have already stated that as soon as the mutineers finally resigned the hope of gaining Ramsay as their chief, they elected in his stead their gloomy and mysterious shipmate, whose ability so pre-eminently fitted him for this post of treble danger.

The line of operations which he had marked out for them we have already seen, and in pursuance of his advice, and under his command, their first cruise was in search of such an island as would suit the purposes of the home they sought.

After some little difficulty, and the abandoning of one or two choice retreats in succession for others of more promise, they at last lighted on one, than which it was scarcely possible not only to find, but even to imagine, a spot more fully adapted to their necessities—more capable of being rendered a fortress, where neither justice nor power should easily reach the outrage of all laws save their own.

On the cruise which led to this desired consummation, they took little besides such few tempting prizes as no buccaneer's heart could resist; and, removing the prisoners and most valuable effects from these, they scuttled and burnt the hulls, and brought their prey to shore.

The second of these contained two of the most dangerous commodities that could possibly have been introduced into the new and strange society which the corporal commanded. The first was not less perilous because delightful to the captors, though it certainly brought to them many and very great advantages to counterbalance its risks; while the second found favour only in the eyes of the first; none of the mutineers being able to endure the mention, scarcely even the sight of it.

And what, then, the reader demands, did these dangerous commodities comprise?

Fourteen petticoats and a missionary.

As the latter is most easily discussed, we will first dismiss his history, and then approach that of his far more interesting companions.

Mr. Jameson Holdout—the Reverend—as he took leave to style himself, was a native of the Isle of Bute. Having been dismissed for embezzlement as paymaster of a marching regiment, he kindly undertook to sail for more distant and enlightened regions, in one sense—though oftimes he was pleased to call them benighted in another,—enlightened, because with them thieving was no vice,—benighted, because they wanted his superior mind to carry out the native genius of this natural impulse, with all the skill of arithmetical refinement that distinguished Mr. Jamie Holdout.

With a manner so peculiarly soft, that its very sliminess carried with it the strongest cause of suspicion, Holdout was in his heart burthened with about as much principle as the generality of embezzlers usually are. Believing himself safely booked for a quiet berth of certain independence, and a flock sufficiently ignorant to receive any dogmas he might see fit to lay down, it was with no small surprise he found himself standing one bright morning on the quarter-deck of the Flying Dutchman, arraigned before the dreaded chief whose word was law, to hear the following admonition—

"You call yourself, I am told, the Reverend Holdout; from this day forth we ease you of all gown and title, beyond that of a nightgown, and the name of a prisoner at large. You have to thank me for successfully interposing to save you from the fate of walking the plank. Understand, then, that pirates hate your cloth worse than a banyan-day. You may, therefore, preach as soon as you please; but be pleased to remember that the day which sees you preach is the last day which sees you living:—the next morning will see you hung. The

same you will understand to be the penalty upon which you perform any other act of your calling, with these two exceptions—whenever I require you to marry or baptize, you may do so; in all other cases, from this day forward, your lips are closed on pain of death. You may go."

Nothing could more greatly have surprised brother Holdout than this address; and retiring, most irremediably chopfallen, the only scrap of consolation that came to mind was that repeated for ages, on the memorable misfortunes of successive generations—"Othello's occupation's gone."

Nine of the females were ladies in a respectable walk of life; four of them being married to passengers then aboard, and the rest spinsters of greater or less claim to good looks, and none of them above two-and-twenty years of age. Some were returning to their families, others were going out to their engaged lovers, and all had in contemplation, at a greater or nearer distance, the great epoch in the life of the human species—marriage. They little, however, contemplated the suddenness of its arrival upon them, or the degree of similarity it might chance to bear to the memorable Sabine story, which marked in their young remembrances the first epoch of the Roman history.

At the capture of their ship, a goodly bark, well freighted with other valuables beside those of their peerless charms, considerable alarm was excited as to what their fate might be.

Their tears were, however, quickly dried, even if their sighs were not altogether repressed, at thoughts of captivity, when the grim chieftain assured them that every kindness and consideration would be shown, short of restoring them to liberty,—which, he gravely and diplomatically remarked, he was not at present able to effect. Thus, for a time at least, was kindly drawn before their eyes a veil, however slight, which hid from their sight the ultimate destiny in store for them.

Nor was this course less kind than wise. The knowledge that the lawless men among whom they were thrown were to be at liberty to sue and woo them would naturally have tinctured with bitterness and sorrow whatever space might otherwise elapse between their capture and the gradual developement of the truth. Nay, more, the corporal knew enough of woman's character to be fully aware that the very announcement that such was likely to be their lot would at once be sufficient to set them against it in toto.

On the other hand, prepared by previous seclusion, and the dull ordeal of their captivity, their minds might be gradually induced to make a choice among those who would surround them, and who, except that they might not possess the charms that education infallibly bestows on both sexes, formed, neverthless, in point of good temper and manly beauty, a society from among which as good a selection might be made as among any class of men whatever.

The remaining females consisted of the merchant sailors' wives, and the attendants on the lady passengers, most of whom were young and good-looking, and with whom Jack, it must be confessed, stood by far the best chance. To these, therefore, addressed themselves all those who were in a hurry to have, as the song says, "their happiness handy." And, accordingly before the Flying Dutchman reached the island of their choice, most of these contented damsels were, by the aid of the Reverend Holdout, held fast enough by most devoted spouses, and all were engaged so to do on coming to land.

The generality of the last, indeed, were somewhat troubled with sea-sickness; which indisposition might have had no inconsiderable weight in producing this delay, combined, it must also be confessed, with some little objections on the part of their mistresses, which conduced to the deferral of their nuptials until the precious ark of mischief should safely place them upon land.

Those of the mutineers who were either more ambitious in their aims, or less violently in haste to make their election, held out for one of the young ladies in the cabin, or the next batch of prizes.

CHAPTER LXI.

"Still we discover, where we least expect,
The port so oft implored in our pray'rs."—STROWENT.

FROM the care which we have already stated to have been used in the choice of the pirates, it may easily be supposed that the position was one of great strength. Further than this, however, it was an island extremely peculiar in its construction, and singularly adapted to the wants of those who had selected it as their home.

In its selection accident favoured the mutineers not less than design. The Flying Dutchman having been overtaken in a severe gale, during her cruise in search of some proper haunt, was by her commanders hove-to during the night, for fear of some fatal mischance, in seas with which none of them appeared to have much acquaintance save the corporal, and his being seemingly not of a description to warrant any other line of conduct.

In the morning, with the first light of dawn, the crew were startled with the cry of breakers on the lee-bow. But a few minutes, rather perhaps moments, elapsed, before all hands were on deck, and the first at his post —the corporal.

The alarm had been but too correctly given. At the distance of barely half a mile the sea was marked by a broad line of pearly foam, conspicuously contrasted with the dark deep blue of the ocean ; while every moment, as the ship drifted nearer, from the gale, there swelled upon the ear the frightful thunder of the tremendous surf, urged by the whole force of that mighty ocean, upon some dimly seen impediment. In the cold gray light of the rapidly increasing day the eye began to trace

out the low but rocky shore of some small island. Then there became distinctly visible the vast bulk of some high land, that rose as abruptly as the Roman Castle of St. Angelo or the Athenian Acropolis; while more distant still were discovered several hills of greater regularity, which a few minutes more showed to be clothed with vegetation to the summit. By this time the vessel was so near the breakers, that their roar upon the ear was little short of that of an action.

"Hands, make sail," was the instantaneous command of the corporal. The more immediate flapping of the canvass as the close-reefed main-course, as it was hauled on board and a reef shaken out of the topsails, for a moment deadened the roar of the waters; and as the frigate drew ahead beneath the heavy gale still blowing, her crew were enabled to see that a long white reef of coral surrounded the isle before them, and offered its beautiful but dangerous barrier to the troubled sea.

Nor of this point was the corporal unmindful; and as soon as the frigate had so far weathered the furthest point of the land that he might put the helm up, he did so, and proceeded to run down on the opposite side of the isle, thus coasting it nearly round.

Still on every quarter the same formidable reef of coral seemed to exist; and being in want of water, and tempted by the unusual appearance of the island to examine it more minutely, he was utterly unable to detect any landing place. His curiosity and skill thus piqued, he determined to wait till the evening, and then, when in all probability the gale would have moderated, it was his intention to try and find a passage by means of a boat. An hour before sunset, accordingly, the sea and wind had so far gone down that he ordered down the frigate's cutter, and taking a hand with him to throw the lead, adventured the dangerous passage to the shore.

After an hour's vain attempts, the sun went down, and left him just able to find his way back to his ship, with much peril.

Thus disconcerted and thwarted, the obstacles in his path seemed to cause considerable reflection. At last the thought naturally occurred, that if it was so difficult for him to effect a landing unopposed, what would it be for any foe, stoutly and resolutely combated by batteries from the shore?

This determined him to wait near the island, till the morrow's light might enable him to make a second and resolute trial for passage.

CHAPTER LXII.

Thus be persevering till the end be won.

For protection during the night, the Flying Dutchman had taken care to make a good offing. By degrees, as day lightened up the decks of the frigate, and as the gale was found to moderate, at an hour after sunrise two reefs were shaken out of the topsails, and the mutineers began to beat up towards the island, which bore, as nearly as might be, eight miles on their weather-bow.

As she neared the desired shore, and her crew were enabled to view from this position the opposite side of the island to that which they had observed on the preceding evening, the eligibility of the spot seemed even greater than it had previously appeared.

In every direction low and gentle valleys opened among the higher lands towards the sea, clothed with the richest verdure, and overhung with hills in the background, whose rich variety of produce gave forth every tint to delight the eyes, and, prodigal of sweetness, flung upon the passing gale a thousand delicious odours.

Not that we would by this mislead the reader into the belief that we have any wish to impose upon him the often-told, and still more frequently refuted tale, of the Spice Islands, whose fragrance has been said to extend for twenty miles to leeward of them. On the

contrary, it would have defied the keenest scent to detect what perfumes ministered to the delight, though the whole was such as few of those rude men failed to perceive and enjoy; even the very dogs who had been taken in the various prizes already made exhibited their pleasure by running to the gangway and courting the land breeze, that bespoke a change of scene.

Still the sharpest scrutiny of the corporal could detect no landing-place. The ship had been-hove to within half a mile of the nearest breakers, while the ship's company were piped to breakfast. During this interval the glass was most carefully used by every officer of the watch, without any continuous passage being discovered.

Here and there, it is true, were seen spots which appeared to be breaks in the vast surface of foam, and where, therefore, it was conjectured that the reefs did not exist underneath. But scarcely had the eye noted down these spaces, when the next surge spread right and left its silvery froth, and all clue to the labyrinth was lost in a moment.

At last it occurred to the corporal, that both now and on the preceding evening he had viewed these seemingly impassable reefs at nearly the same time of tide, a little before high water. By waiting, therefore, till the tide went down, the reefs, or at least many of them, would themselves be seen, and a channel to the shore, if such existed, be discovered. Meanwhile the corporal, to turn time to advantage, proceeded to ascertain, if possible, what soundings he had alongside. After trying in vain for half an hour, with a line of a hundred fathoms, to reach the bottom, he gave up the attempt, and resumed the survey on the coast before him.

Though very considerably abated, the gale still blew freshly, and the sun shone in full splendour. Everything ashore appeared in full strength and beauty, and the pirates gazed with many a longing glance at a spot

that they had already begun to surmise was not unlikely to become their home. The corporal surveyed it with a sterner and far more melancholy aspect.

Perhaps at that hour he repented of those seemingly uncontrollable impulses which had led him on thus far. Perhaps some misgivings of the future termination, not unlikely to crown his labours, glanced across the lowering perspective. For a few moments the scene seemed to have lost that fierce excitement it had so lately possessed. and putting his hands across his eyes, he seemed occupied with thoughts most foreign to what was passing around him.

Not long did the trance endure. Breaking from it abruptly as it had come over him, he seized the glass lying beside him, and applied it to his eye once more.

"Well, Mynheer," said Mustapha, coming up at this moment, "what do you think of yon little hummock for a rookery?"

"Right well, my trusty Caliph," replied the corporal, giving his shipmate the name he now usually bore on board, "if the frigate could only get a mode of landing us there with sound timbers; if not, we must just do as we dow—to use an old word."

"Then the sooner you set about it, Mynheer, the better. Though what the dickens you may mean, brother, by *dowing* the craft, I can't guess. This, however, I see, that you've as much chance of landing yonder as you have of making sail to the moon."

"Well, come now, Master Caliph, I'll make you an even bet I'll land on yonder island before you've time to tell your longest story."

"Well, well, if you speak so sure of it, may be you will, for I must say I've seen you do in your time some of the hardest goes as ever a man goed at; but is the craft worth the calking? Will that crib be likely to suit our donkey?"

"To a hair, man; I've been looking at the land there for the last hour. Nothing can be better for defence,

if we once get ashore; there seems plenty of good pasture and soil for our cattle and crops; and only think, Caliph, if we master and fortify that high rock. who the devil is ever to move us?"

"Ay, ay, that's all very fine, Mynheer; but who the devil is ever to get up there? Why, look ye where it shears down upon the sea—it's something better than five hundred feet high, and as smooth as my hand."

"So much the better. The greater the difficulty the greater the honour in getting the better of it, to say nothing of the increased safety in case an enemy ever *should* land."

"Ay, Mynheer, you may well say *should*, though the word did seem to stick in your mouth—mighty hard of pronouncing like. But 'tis no sort of use to shy the matter, brother; and, to speak my mind freely, we've been so blessed polite as to put the ropes round our own necks, and may as well therefore wear them quietly. I suppose some bright morning we shall get a signal to tow a line; so like Miss Scherezade, we may tell what stories we like to put it off till such time."

"Ay, and so let it rest quiet till then at any rate. But, while we've been talking, the tide's gone down nearly low enough. I think I see something very like a clear opening away there on the weather quarter; so while I step into the second barge, and try it once more, do you stay aboard and take the command."

CHAPTER LXIII.

By us unknown the fear to change or roam,
And all we ask is freedom and a home.

Being now in a position to leeward of the island, the corporal had the great advantage of a smoother sea Still the surf beat heavily, and the service on which he had voluntarily embarked was one of no ordinary danger.

Again and again did he imagine that he had at last found out a passage among the breakers, sufficiently large and practible for the entrance of the frigate to that space between the serfs and the shore where the sea assumed the aspect of a mill-pond, compared with the turmoil and agitation of the waters beyond.

In this respect, troublesome as was the barrier to pass, yet, its intricacies once threaded, it acted so completely as a breakwater, that any ship inside might securely ride by a single anchor in still water.

This, then, was the haven perpetually before his eye, to the attainment of which he perpetually approached—from the possession of which he was as constantly driven back.

Frequently, after tracking his route with the utmost caution—all but dashed by the long, heavy rolling seas on those sharp points which would instantly have cut his boat into a thousand atoms—within the toss of a biscuit of the space he so anxiously desired to gain, at the very last he found, to his mortification and annoyance, as on the preceding evening, a long low line of the dangerous coral, showing its white and impassable breakers, and putting to the test all the strength of his powers to avoid being cast on it.

Little accustomed as he was ever to resign a pursuit in which he had once embarked, even the corporal was tempted to give up in despair. At the last moment, when the rapidly rising tide threw additional obstacles in his way, and when he least expected his efforts to be successful, he found a long and tortuous passage, which, though full of abrupt windings, was still sufficiently large for the passage of the frigate.

That this should be practicable to the end, was, after all his disappointments with less questionable openings, more than he could possibly expect; still, as a part of his system to leave no effort untried, he would not neglect the attempt.

Turn after turn answered—still no banks appeared

beneath the surface, which, if not disturbing the water, might still strand a vessel of any deep draught—still the hand-line gave a depth of ten, fifteen, and thirty fathoms—still, with each freshly opened vista, no direct line appeared across it, as it had been so often the case before. He almost began to hope, and yet at the further end, the surface was one sheet of foam. No—no reef appeared. Still the lead told a favouring tale—almost, he feared, too favourable to be true. Yet still he was approaching the desired space. Now, then, would come the final fatal obstacle; a moment more would decide it—the turning of that further angle!

"Give way, my boys—a long, strong pull. So—so—gently as we draw near the bank. Pull up to the larboard-bow there—pull—quick! There she rounds it—by Jove—huzza! There lies our opening, all clear at last! Give way, my lads, a stroke or two more—so. Now we're in clear smooth water. Let's have three cheers, as a signal to those in the frigate."

As the corporal said these words, the barge dashed gallantly through the reefs that surrounded her on both sides. The sea lashed into a continuous sheet of foam, as the surges boiled and eddied round the abrupt beds and sharp particles of the coral, and shot in upon the clear surface of the inner circle, where the dark blue of the water bespoke its depth, and only an occasional spot of froth bore witness to the struggle it had undergone, as the flecks of foam on the courser's flank bespeak at the goal the exertions by which it was gained.

Tossing up their oars at the corporal's words the seamen sent three such hearty cheers down to leeward, that the expectant crew of the frigate heard them with little difficulty, and returned them with good-will.

After a pause, to recover from the long and arduous pull which they had undergone, the crew of the barge proceeded to row slowly along-shore, to observe what part offered the most desirable and tempting landing.

For a considerable distance the mutineers passed on

under a high rocky shore, averaging from thirty to fifty feet, overhung with wood, and showing its bright colours in the noon-day sun. No sound was heard but the loud and heavy fall of the sea, repeated at long intervals, as the waves beat heavily upon the shore.

Here and there it would have been possible to have scaled some cleft, by aid of the roots that so plentifully protruded wherever the slightest quantity of mould gave nourishment; but the long roll of the sea fell so heavily on the rocks, that the corporal made for some safer landing.

Suddenly, while engaged in talking on the appearance of the frigate as she lay-to in the distance, her snow-white sails affording in the sunshine a strong contrast to the hull, so worn and rusty from long want of paint, an opening of five or six hundred yards presented itself in the hitherto impervious shores on their right hand, and they found themselves at the entrance of a little estuary, that gave promise of a small but excellent harbour.

On either side the rocky ground was continued, rising rather than diminishing in height, the inlet, as it subsequently proved, running up to the island for nearly a mile, and gradually shoaling its depth until it terminated in a small water-course, that during the rainy seasons seemed to be filled from the mountains in the centre of the island.

Here not the slightest difficulty presented itself in selecting whatever landing-place the mutineers thought proper. So tamed was the swell of the sea, that the surface was still almost as a loch; and as it was now at the top of the tide when the pirates set foot on shore and secured their barge, so nothing could be more beautiful than the scene around.

The woods came down on every side "to drink the passing wave," and the quiet and repose that reigned around fell on the ruffled spirits of the leading mutineer like balm from heaven, contrasting strangely with the roar of the surf in which he had lately been involved,

and indeed with the whole tenor of those awful scenes that had so lately made up the sum and substance of his life.

Even the still prevailing strength of the night's gale appeared unable to penetrate to this sequestered little spot, where sunshine and repose appeared to have taken up their abode. In the distance, the corporal's eye rested on two abrupt and massive fronts of rock which guarded the entrance to the cove on either side. Beyond these, again, the broad and dark blue line of the distant sea was belted, as it were, with the bright and vivid streak of foam, reflecting back every ray of light, where the agitated water waged its perpetual warfare with the reefs that girdled in the isle.

Tranquillised by the scene around him, the leader sat apart from his men, who were giving loud expression to their merriment and satisfaction; the influence of the moment seemed to unbend the stern lines upon his forehead, and gave to his dark gray eye an expression of softness and feeling, that few could trace in it at other times.

Presently the sails of the Flying Dutchman came in sight, as, having filled and stood on, she slowly coasted by. Could midnight suddenly supervene on noon, the change would not be greater, more sudden, or more dark, than that which came over the countenance of the mutineer.

At the sight of the frigate, on the command of which he had contributed to seize, horror, disgust, and some deeper feeling, seemed to shake him to the very core; and this first emotion over, death does not leave its victim more pallid than became the corporal. Yet these were but the changes of the moment. With that presence of mind which so distinguished all his actions, he quickly glanced round, to see if his men were watching him. On the contrary, however, they had procured from their barge the provisions allotted for their dinner, and, by the side of an exquisite spring which they had

already discovered, were discussing the pleasures in store for them, little dreaming that so near at hand they might have read the fearful price at which the gratification of human passion is obtained.

CHAPTER LXIV.

And this is a paradise that only wants,
For its perfection, innocence of mind.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the appearance of the domain which the pirates had thus acquired by that true method which, since the days of Columbus, has been so much in fashion—discovery. The bread-fruit, the palm-tree, and many other equally desirable, were seen growing in profusion, and, as far as Nature went, the elements of human happiness were all at hand.

Not far from the seat which the corporal occupied rose the immense and almost perpendicular rock to which I have already alluded. It seemed as if, in the days of the Titans, some former masters of the island must have hewed this huge mass into its present form, as a sort of watch-tower or keep to their domain.

With very slight exceptions, indeed, its sides were directly vertical, those towards the sea more especially so, and the naked rock, gleaming purple and yellow in the strong noon-day sun, was only relieved here and there by long tufts of some peculiar grass, that, rooted in the crannies of the marble, flung out its long waving pennons on the gale, which, at such a height, was still very powerful.

In many places this grass was interspersed with a dwarfish and parasitical shrub, the branches of which, streaming to and fro, gave a singular look of wild and desolate beauty to the vast old crag, not lessened by the rich character of the scenery beneath.

From the direction which these branches seemed to

have taken, it was evident that the prevailing wind was from the same quarter as that in which it now was.

On the leeward or land side of the rock its sides were somewhat more broken, and not so perpendicular, and there the trees shot up at intervals with great strength and vigour; while, on the very summit, they formed a feathery crown of the most perfect beauty, the vivid tints of green sparkling in the sun and gale with all the colours of the emerald.

Most men, on seeing a crag of this singular description, abruptly rising from a comparatively level plain, and mounting to a height considerably more than five hundred feet, would naturally have wondered what sudden feat of nature could have produced it. Such a thought, however, never entered into the brain of the mutineer. From the very moment it first struck his eye, its future destination was settled. Every particle of the brushwood that grew on its sides must be given to fire, and this cover thus cleared away, not a point should be left by which its vast sides could be scaled, save one where a zig-zag staircase should be cut and fortified in such a manner, that every flight below should be entirely commanded by the flight next above, and thus to the very top. Finally, as a mode of defying all invasion, even this stair should not come lower down the rock than within a hundred feet of the base, where the cliff being hewed and blasted to a perpendicular fall, should be mounted only by a set of shrouds like a ship's rigging, which the pirates above, on an attack, would thus have it in their power to cut away at any moment.

On the very summit of this inaccessible post, which he thenceforward named the citadel, should be the barracks of his most chosen staff. Below, on the first landing from the shrouds, should be the quarters of others on whom he could equally depend, while in the middle, between the fires of both, should be located those of his crew of whose steadiness or fidelity he might have reason to entertain any suspicion.

Thus, the duty of cutting away the shrouds would be devolved on hands equal and devoted to the true execution of the dangerous task, in case of any surprise; and immediately on the brow of the little declivity below, where he now sat overlooking the water, should be built the hamlet of his various prisoners, all under the very muzzles of the guns with which he had already determined the citadel should be abundantly mounted.

There also he resolved to keep a store of ammunition and provisions for the garrison that manned it, sufficient to outlast a twelvemonth's siege. If, by chance, on gaining its summit, no spring should be found, as was but too probable in such case, he determined to hew out a large reservoir, and by spreading sails during the rainy season, collect a sufficient quantity to answer a commensurate demand.

While these plans for future security passed through the leader's never-slumbering brain, he could not help feeling elated at the strong position which fate seemed to have cast in his way.

"Heaven knows," muttered he, "if any human skill is to avail one who"—a slight shudder involuntary crept across the muscles of his countenance, and after a silence of a few seconds, he resumed—"if any skill *may* avail to shun our fate, here, notwithstanding all that's come and gone, we may live long, and die quietly at last. What are the points from which we have anything to fear? Detection?—Who is there to tell the tale?—Not the dead—they keep a secret well enough; and none other who ever knew what we really are, exist anywhere but in our own possession. Detection therefore is unlikely. But suppose detection—if it can only be deferred a few years, till our population and means increase—what power could ever force those reefs? Say that even *three* passages exist round this little island to the shore, instead of the one I found with so much difficulty—it is but to command them with batteries on land, and a single spar knocked away, or a man shot

at the wheel, and the best handled craft in the world is in pieces on those coral beds in a few seconds. The island, with moderate cultivation, might always be made to yield produce sufficient to support its inhabitants; and even if a hostile landing should by any unforeseen events take place, a determined garrison in such an impregnable stronghold as the citadel might be able to weary out and exterminate, from their commanding position, a very superior force. On the other hand, should these auguries of ill prove unfounded, here may be found every requisite to make up the sum of man's happiness, in a calm and tranquil existence!"

Forced into vehement and deadly action as the mutineer had ever been through life, he felt that there was that within him which longed for this repose; and as he thought of this, his eye seemed to fix upon the blue horizon, in search of something that was still wanting to make the chance of joy complete.

"Then—then, indeed," muttered he, "I might at last own that life was worth enduring. Weak fool that I am—yet can I not persuade myself to lay the burden down. Well, since it is so, I will try how far I can mould bad materials to a useful end, and be the founder of a little state that may some day prove a worthier community than a host of buccaneers. Yet was this our fault?"

How far the answer to such a question should go, we leave to our readers, while, in the progress of our story, we watch how much of the muser's plans "the gods accept," and how much, to continue the thought of Homer, they "dispersed to idle air."

CHAPTER LXV.

"Long o'er the brine th' adventurous corsairs roam,
Till island deserts yield the joys of home;
Love hides their guilt—affection smooths each care,
For woman's smiles and gentleness are there."—
R. Powell Davis.

As soon as the corporal had arisen from his reveries, and the barge's crew had concluded their dinner, he called them together, and proceeded to fell a small tree with the axes they had brought, and cut it up into short junks, ready for buoying, on their return to the ship, the various turns in the passage which they had discovered through the reefs. For once more discovering this important channel, the corporal now chiefly relied on his own strong memory, and such bearings as he had been enabled to take at the moment.

This arrangement made, the party embarked about four o'clock, just as the tide had nearly reached low water once more; and, full of merriment and confidence in the joys of the future, they set out to regain the ship.

Finding, during the intervening hours since they left the frigate, that she had stood away a considerable distance to windward, the corporal caused three muskets to be fired at once, as a signal of their return; and the watch on board the Flying Dutchman understanding its purport, her helm was put up, and she herself came swiftly bearing down with all the canvass she could show.

After some difficulty, the passage through which they had gained the shore was again found, and now came the dangerous task of laying down buoys at the various points where the channel wound out of a direct line. Coolness and perseverance at length accomplished this object; and as the sun sank beneath the horizon, the barge's crew tossed up their oars once more alongside their ship, and hastened on board with the joyful news

of having at last alighted on the desired land of milk and honey, which was, moreover, in its position, more inaccessible than a hedge-hog in his skin, and as snug as a snail in his shell. Alas! how few inquired whether the hedge-hog might not be worried, and the snail be crushed!

The barge hoisted up, the ship stood out to sea once more, to make a good offing for the night. This gained, her sails were reduced to double-reefed top-sails, jib, and driver; and herself being made as "snug" as the island, the corporal gave orders to "splice the main brace," in commemoration of the day's success. "Sweethearts and wives" were drank and caressed in abundance, and night fell upon these rude children of the sea, as happy in their rough, unthinking mode, as if no crime had stained their lives, nor tree nor hemp were growing to form the gibbet or the halter.

With far different emotions the intelligence of the day's success was received in the cabin, which the kindness of the corporal had given up to the female prisoners. There many a soft heart fluttered with anxious hope, or drooped beneath the last emotions of despair. The very sound of shore, and the report brought them by their servants and husbands, that it was a shore of great beauty and plentiful promise, was, despite of concurrent circumstances, refreshing to spirits worn to death by their long voyage, and the additional confinement to which many of them had chosen to condemn themselves, rather than be the subject of their captors' gaze.

On the other hand, while they were afloat there always existed the hope, however distant, that the pirates might be captured, and themselves restored to liberty and their friends. To a third party there was a source of emotion, perhaps more stirring than any other.

The officers of the ship who had refused to join the mutineers had been allowed to mix freely with the

other prisoners; and as idleness begets love, or tha degree of attachment that assumes its name, so there were few of the young spinsters or bachelors on board who were not more than inclined to become Benedicts.

The arrival, therefore, of the frigate at the island, likely to prove the head-quarters of the mutineers, became a crisis in their fate. Many a soft hand trembled that night, as the usual party in the cabin broke up—many a fair bosom courted sleep in vain—while the officers, accustomed to be the sport of Fortune, and make the most of her slightest smiles, fell readily into the soft path that seemed opening for them in the midst of peril; only too happy that amidst their troubles chance gave them so large and unexpected a recompense as a home, and some one whom they loved to share it, without the anxiety of counting ways and means, as they must have done in England, or the responsibility of seeking the duties that it imposed.

At first the mutineers were much inclined to resent and interfere with the opportunities which the captive officers enjoyed of gaining the affections of the "young leddies;" but the corporal very cunningly persuaded them that he had permitted affairs to take this course solely for the benefit of the crew.

"When once," said he, "we get them all fairly in love, or married, they will have neither time nor inclination to watch or surprise us. Leave it but to me, and I'll take prizes enough to find wives for the whole of you; and if everything else fails, it is but to make a stretch over to the Spanish American coast, and we may carry off and choose from fifty villages."

A gentleman who could sing promissory notes to th s compass was sure to charm his audience; and fully believing that earth was very shortly to yield up all its most delightful possessions for their enjoyment, the mutineers agreed to fall in with their leader's views, and put off their own courtships till the next cruise.

Early on the ensuing morning, after the landing of the

corporal, the ship's boats were all hoisted out, lowered down, and provided with tow-ropes, and every other requisite which any emergency might demand. They were then veered astern, and just before the turn of low water the frigate stood towards the entrance of the buoyed channel. Here all the boats were manned and sent ahead to tow in case of accidents, each boat being conned by one of the bargemen who had landed the day before, and the corporal himself conning the frigate on the starboard cathead.

The gale had by this time subsided down into a light breeze, the surface of the water was comparatively calm, and though the swell beating on the reefs was still very heavy, it was perhaps as light as ever the immense impetus of that vast ocean permitted it to be.

On the quarter-deck, abaft the mizenmast, were crowded all the prisoners, dressed out as gaily, and looking, many of them, as happy as if mere voluntary passengers to some enchanting island of Calypso, where a new existence of love and idleness awaited all.

Indeed, as far as the mere appearance of their new home went, it might have been easily held to stand for that or any other region of romance; and even those whose "eyes grew dim at the thoughts of home," could not refrain from giving some slight pause to sorrow, as the frigate, after wending her way unhurt through all the dangers of the coral reefs, stood slowly on beneath that lovely shore; the deep and musical voice of her seamen chanting out from her chains, at intervals, the depths of those soundings which their hand leads gave, and every bend of the romantic shore unfolding scenes whose beauty nothing could surpass.

So fortunate is it for man, the sport of such a variety of accidents, that his nature is formed insensibly to adapt itself to the pressure of the moment, and find comfort and relief in the mere changes of his sorrows!

CHAPTER LXVI.

In vain we preach, in vain we pray:
Man, to temptation giv'n,
Mistakes too oft upon the way
His weaknesses for heaven.

The harbour being gained by the frigate, the corporal had her worked into a deep and rocky creek, and moored head and stern. Here not only her hull was screened from all the effects of the wind, let it rage from what quarter it might; but, what was scarcely less important under their circumstances, the ship's spars and rigging were so hidden by the surrounding hills that no part of her could be detected from the sea, except her topgallantmasts and the heads of her topmasts.

To withdraw these from observation, and prevent any casual passers-by from suspecting that the island was inhabited,—the corporal's first act was to strike topmasts and lower yards, and get rid of all the prisoners for the time being, by giving them leave to take a ramble on their parole, with this hint, that any one found making signals to a passing ship, or approaching the shore for that purpose, should be forthwith shot.

He now proceeded rapidly in the execution of his various plans. The frigate's hull was painted in small alternate stripes of gray and white, which gave that misty looming appearance that had so horrified the crew of the Spider, and a set of nettings were made of the same shape and size as her sails, which formed the principal means towards keeping up the deception necessary to support her name, and make her appear to carry a heavy press of canvass, when, in fact, little or nothing was exposed to the gale beyond her bare poles: these were additionally strengthened in the slighter spars, according to the corporal's original design, by a diagonal wreathing band of sheet copper, two inches broad.

In addition, no minutiæ were spared to render more facile and manageable this the grand artifice, and the ship

thoroughly repaired and refitted in every respect. The leader then assembled all his crew, and proposed to them, one by one, the various laws he had framed for their guidance. These were altered and modified by the opinion of those who were to be ruled by them, and any difference of sentiment settled by the majority, their execution being left wholly in the corporal. By this means he escaped the reproach of severity in carrying out regulations framed by themselves.

Canvass tents were erected on shore the second day after their arrival, and soon afterwards such rude huts as on the spur of the moment they could manage to erect. The nests being built, there poured in upon the chieftain the various petitions of Jack for the service of the Rev. Holdout, for no marriage was to be legal unless the parson had obtained leave to officiate from this his novel diocesan, and new commanding officer.

Foreseeing how necessary it was that this rite should be observed with every possible degree of punctilio and decorum, the mutineer fixed the day, invited all his prisoners to be present on the quarter-deck, formed an awning over the latter, with the various flags of the ship, and when his guests were duly gathered, the drum beat to divisions, and the crew mustered in their places, with as much regularity and form as if still under the royal pendant.

Every man wore his snow-white trousers and frock in the best Sunday trim; for the corporal had taken care to put his men on their metal, and each was ambitious to show to the captive officers that discipline and efficiency might be equally exact under an authority of reason, as in a state where, to the servitude of the slave, the fear of the brute was added.

These preliminaries observed, the ceremony proceeded with the most scrupulous gravity. Seven of the seamen received the hands of their fair conquerors for better or worse. The crew were piped down, and the rest of the day declared a holiday.

Previously, however, the officers were given to understand, that in their case any publicity would be dispensed with, further than that such ceremonies of the church as the leader allowed must take place in the assembled presence of themselves.

The good effects of this regulation were soon visible. Finding that a uniform principle of law was to be observed, which, though self-made, was perfectly steady and consistent, and not the wild instigation of license adopted in its stead, our adventurous friend the surgeon, Dolichus, found courage to court the silken bands of Hymen; then the old Scotch master: and this example being set by their seniors, the lieutenants took heart and came up to the fight in a body, thus realising the corporal's crafty anticipations, that all, either involved in love or married, would prove disinclined, and ill at leisure, to watch or interrupt him. Thus, also, they would soon possess an increasing stake in the community, as husbands and fathers, which must render them most anxious to preserve peace and order in the strange community, in which their lot was cast.

In every department the plans of the mutineers were carried out with equal system. All the live stock that the corporal had been able to preserve was most carefully tended, and its increase looked to with the utmost anxiety, salt provisions being issued till a more liberal diet could be allowed. Every occupation had its certain class, the most laborious being naturally alloted to the prisoners, who, after all, had little cause to complain of the terms on which they were allowed their sustenance. The citadel was now rigged and fortified, according to the mode already pointed out. The little colony throve and prospered even better and more harmoniously than its founder had ventured to hope. Successive cruises of the Flying Dutchman added immensely to their population—their stock—their comforts—their luxuries,—and woe for them, it must also be told, to their wants. Still they experienced more of real quiet happiness than falls

to the lot of far more deserving communities; and had they possessed the blessing of knowing when to be content, their measure would have been full

Under these flourishing circumstances, then, it was that the corporal put to sea, on his last cruise, leaving Mustapha in command.

CHAPTER LXVII.

"Count not, O man, that joy shall dwell with thee!
O'erweigh not, slave, the blessings of the free!
Repine not, wealth, that health should shield the poor,
Nor envy, sons of toil, the great man's store!
The heart's the world! which fortune still enshrouds—
A spot for sunshine—shaded round with clouds!"

But two days had elapsed since the Flying Dutchman sailed, when an occurrence at once dashed to the ground the serenity of the little colony we have described. A great part of the provisions consumed by the islanders was supplied by the fresh fish with which the surrounding waters abounded. The amusement of catching these was also one of the most esteemed pastimes of the garrison who were left in charge.

On the morning in question, two boats had gone out to enjoy this sport, and supply the general rations. While thus engaged, the boat containing Mustapha passed along the inner circle of the coral reefs, and there, entangled among the branches of one of the beds, the old seaman descried a piece of wood, as he thought, tied round with ropeyarn.

As this was in a position somewhat difficult and dangerous to reach, he forbore to gratify the curiosity he naturally felt on seeing it. But, while turning over in his own mind what it could be, he espied another and similar piece of drifted-wood floating slowly towards his boat from the island. Watching his time, and picking up this second piece, he found, to his utmost astonishment, that it was composed of the tough porous bark of

one of the native tress, originally slit into two pieces and then very carefully and strongly lashed round a common wine-bottle.

Unfortunately the mystery did not end here. The bottle was closely sealed, and contained inside a scroll of paper.

With the caution of an old stager, Mustapha narrowly examined the exterior of the bottle before proceeding any further. The wax on the cork bore the impression of a coat of arms; so, avoiding any injury to this, he broke off the neck, and extracted the contents.

Though naturally little given to wonder, the old fellow's surprise was extreme on reading a brief and seaman-like description of their island. Its latitude and longitude, the facts of their mutiny, the murder of their captain, and the captivity of the officers, were all set forth.

This startling document read, the similar parcel on the reef was obtained, and an exact counterpart of the contents therein discovered, bearing the same seal, and in the same handwriting, and differing only in date. Without saying a word to his boat's crew, he feigned some story, resumed the fishing for another hour, and then going with both boats back to dinner, took aside Cresswell, who was left with him in the command, and communicated to his colleague the intelligence that traitors were at work amongst them.

On a second examination of the two discovered scrolls, they perceived the date of the one first read, to be more recent by a month than that of the other found amidst the coral. The precise similarity of both, agreeing word for word, showed that these effusions were but part of a greater and determined whole—which, for aught they could decide, might have been at work for months. The bottles were clearly intended to float out to sea, and betray intelligence of what had happened, and where the mutineers might be discovered.

But the very care with which they had been cased

with bark, to allow of their finding their way through the reefs in safety, had in all probability been the cause of their discovery. Had the unprotected bottles been allowed to brave the perils of the wave, they would either have floated through the coral, or been broken, and thus discovery in all likelihood avoided.

The first question was, who could be the traitor? The style of the language, the seamanlike manner in which the bark was frapped over the glass—above all, the insertion of the latitude and longitude of the island, —all pointed suspicion on the head of their old enemy the master, whose determined activity in rubbing out the log-board, and otherwise obstructing the search for Ramsay, now came to their minds with a degree o force that pleaded little in his favour; yet the writing clearly was not his.

Cresswell suggested that the next most disaffected prisoner was Holdout. He was a scribe, and the characters of the scrolls were, from their precise formal nature, likely enough to have emanated from the cashiered paymaster. This point, however, they were able most easily to determine.

The corporal had ruled that every birth in the island should be registered. Holdout, as registrar, had given one of these certificates of birth to Cresswell for his son lately born, and on the mutineer's producing and comparing the handwriting of this with that of the fatal scrolls, not a doubt could remain that they were the produce of the same pen and party.

The seals of the bottles, being identical, were next examined, but neither were able to recognise their device. On the whole aspect of the case, however, it was determined instantly to arrest Holdout and the master, and seize all their papers, according to the true government fashion, liberal or despotic, to see whether these afforded proofs either of the guilt or innocence of the suspected prisoners.

Not an instant was lost in carrying this decision into

effect; Mustapha, with one party well armed, set off to take the master, and Cresswell, with similar support to pounce upon the sleeker person of the luckless Holdout.

The terrors of guilt were clearly visible in the countenance of the latter, as he saw the grim intruders of his dwelling surround his person, while Cresswell told him he was arrested. The master however, with the utmost assurance, poured forth upon Mustapha's eyes and limbs as many objurgations as if still supported by the whole articles of war.

"Thank ye, Master Soundings, thank ye, heartily, for anything," said old Mustapha in reply! "but before ye heave any further ahead with that sort of discoorse, be kind enough to look at your ticker, and see how many bells it is, that you may know when and where you were arrested?"

The master's only reply to this was to give the old seaman a very energetic assurance that his, Mustapha's mother was of the canine breed, and the female sex.

"I can't see what that ere fact has to do with this here case, Mr. Soundings," coolly replied the caliph; and since you won't oblige me by letting me know how you keep your time, I must just look for myself."

With these words, and before the master was aware of his intention, Mustapha quickly but gently laid hold of the steel chain depending from the master's fob, and drew out the watch attached. While pretending to examine the dial, the very copious oaths of its peppery possessor, the quartermaster, saw at a glance that the seal appended to the chain bore the same coat of arms with that impressed on the corks of the traitorous bottles.

Placing the whole in his pocket without uttering a word, he ordered the master off to the mutineers' barracks in the citadel, and sending the master's wife into the house of one of her next neighbours, as he said, "for a drop of consolation or any other licker," he proceeded to search her husband's desk. Nothing else

was, however, found in point but some detached workings of navigation questions, which gave the same latitude and longitude as that described in the scrolls, and proved that the writer, notwithstanding all the vigilance of his captors, had contrived to take the observations necessary to work out these nautical questions.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

"When most her suit young Mercy doth entreat,
Woman she makes her dear ambassadress."

THE two hours' time which was allowed for dinner had barely expired, when the hoarse rattle of the drum from the neighbouring citadel drew all the garrison to quarters. Everything being reported ready for action, all hands were summoned to the great square, on the very crown, or nearly so, of the rocky fortress, to hold a *wittenagemote*, or council of wise men, on the fate of Holdout and the master, and the important facts concerning them, of which discovery had so recently been made.

As these general assemblies were matters of no very unusual occurrence, the mutineers were fully accustomed to go through all the attendant forms with the most perfect gravity and business-like deportment.

With great attention and silence they heard Mustapha state the manner in which the papers had been found, the seals securing them, the circumstances that pointed suspicion on the accused parties, and the arrests that had been made. The fatal documents themselves were then handed round.

On the subsiding of the general hum occasioned by the remarks on these damning proofs, there was a general cry for the culprits to be produced one by one. Accordingly, the master was led forth from the cabin where he had been confined, and being obliged to mount a barrel, which had been purposely tilted on its end,

while a marine stood sentry by him with a loaded musket, he remained a conspicuous object for the examination of the mutineers.

"Well, you ould limb of the devil," cried an Irish foretopman, who entertained a long-standing and most special grudge against the prisoner, "do you know anything of these little bits of potted paper that some one's been after preserving so carefully?"

"I canna say that I do," stoutly replied the northern.

"Will you swear that, Mr. Soundings?" inquired Mustapha.

"I could if it were necessary, but I have many conscientious scruples as to swearing, and I cannot see why a gentleman's word should na be as good as his aith."

"No fear yours is," quoth a third

"Come, come, old gemman!" interrupted a fourth, "let's have none of your conscience-like scruples here. If you come to that, you may as well say you did the trick at once—we're up to that sort of gammon. D'ye think we never heard of soft soap afore to-day? Will you say you had no sort of hand in this whatever?"

"On my honour as a Scotchman, I assure you I did not write one word of it."

"'Vast heaving!" said some other of his numerous examiners; "wait till you're asked whether you *wrote* it or not,—we hav'n't come to that yet."

"Just so," chimed in some one else. "But perhaps, as you're so clever in working *double* altitudes, you'll tell us how the seal of your watch came to be used for this queer purpose?"

"Do you expect me, then, to call over the names of every man I've lent my seal to since I've been in the island?"

"No, we don't ask you to have such a wery good memory as all that comes to, Mr. Soundings," replied Mustapha; "but we do look for a little of your condescension to tell us how it was you came to take ob-

servations for working out the longitude and latitude of the island, without *our* commodore ever so much as asking for it."

"Why, because, man, it was my duty and profession, and if I hadna done something of the sort, lying so long here on my oars, I should have got so rusty, I shouldn't have known how to manage it on a pinch, if you'd wanted it."

"Thank ye, sir, thank ye,—that's what we call too obliging. Shipmates, do any of ye want to ask the prisoner any further question?"

"Just answer me this one thing, Soundings," said one of the oldest hands, "and if you can manage such a thing—try for once to speak the truth—I know 'tis asking a bit of a favour of ye—but ye see afore long, you may be either in Abraham's bosom or Beelzebub's breeches, and speaking strait may sarve ye to the better berth of the two. Do you mean to tell us in a solemnified manner that you had *no sort* of knowledge of this matter?"

"As you are my judges, I tell ye I had not the most distant knowledge in the world of it."

"What!" began another; but before he could complete the sentence, the proceedings were interrupted by the sudden invasion of thirty or forty of the seamen's wives, who, with tears and cries and vehement gesticulations expressive of their grief, rushed in upon the deliberating council, and implored the instant liberation of Holdout.

Before giving any attention to this unexpected demand, Mustapha made a signal to the sentry guarding the master, and the latter was quickly moved into secure confinement once more.

But this was the least of the new evils. The women, whose especial property the Rev. Holdout seemed to have made himself, would take no denial of their prayer, and nothing in the least resembling an assent seemed ever likely to be given them. On the contrary,

the men, angry and annoyed at finding their power over either of the culprits disputed, summarily prevented any further appeals to their clemency, by adjourning to the court which surrounded their chief magazine, and shutting the gates on the tender-hearted, at once put it to the general vote, what should be the sentence on the master?

In reply to this question, put formally from the head of their number, Mustapha, the answer by the majority was,—"*Guilty*—DEATH." From this summary union of crime and sentence, a very respectable minority were dissentient. Many considered that the guilt was not sufficiently proved, others, even if proved, that the punishment of death was too severe, on one who had never given any parole as to his conduct, and in whom, therefore, any attempt to gain his liberty was not only natural, but such as, after all, they had no right to punish with such a sentence. The answer to this refinement was characteristic—that their right was safely founded in their might, and that expedience and necessity were full justifications for that degree of rigour which was so necessary as an example to the other prisoners.

The question was then raised by the other party, whether, before condemnation was passed on the master, they would not previously examine Holdout, since the writing found was confessedly that of his hand?

Sufficiently tender-hearted himself in all his thoughts and dealings, Mustapha had not calculated on this ebullition of wrath and hasty vengeance on those two unhappy culprits whom he had seen it was his duty for him to bring forward for examination. His voice, therefore, was most loudly raised for granting to the prisoners every consideration compatible with the safety of the mutineers; and foremost before every other act, on no consideration to determine the fate of the master until Holdout had been examined.

"How can we tell," reasoned the old tar, "that there may not be some truth in what Soundings says?"

"'Vast heaving! Lord love ye, Mustaphy, you might as well look for the truth in the tears of Poll of Wapping. Masters, boatswains, yeomen, and women are always licensed to tell lies at liberty."

"Right, boy, right; and devilish good care they take that the liberty shan't die away for want of exercise."

"That may be all very fine, gentlemen, as the sultan said to the Janissaries when they voted the throne vacant without his leave; such kindness to my mind is like the pearl beyond price, which some of you here, perhaps, mayn't know, was the present of King Solyman to Queen Sheby. The master, arter all, has only done what perhaps we should all have tried on, if in his place, though we might have managed it more cleverly; and if not, ask yourselves how you should like to be sarved out, and ne'er so much as a single *wickedness* allowed to be examined in your favour. Let's look at the case. We all know that the papers isn't in the master's handwriting, but Holdout's. How, then, do we know that Holdout did not crib the latitude and longitude from the master, which, arter all, there wasn't much harm in his taking, provided he didn't do it with an eye to use it against us? Well, then, for anything we know yet, I say Holdout might have cribbed these matters, and then borrowed the master's seal to put on the cork, just to get the blame off his own shoulders; for these Methodies are always the cunningest warmint going."

"Ay, ay, Mustaphy, that's likely enough; but the Methody couldn't have logged down everything in such seamanlike fashion, if there hadn't been some fellow with a blue jacket on at his elbow."

"And why not, I should like to know? For anything I should like to swear, the Methody may be a blue jacket himself, and only shamming the black coat for fear we should work him."

"Well, well, Mustaphy, have your own way. Let the sentry stand by the master while we hear what this precious Holdout has to say for himself."

"Holdout! Holdout!" repeatedly shouted the crew.

"Here he comes," answered others.

"Rescue him! rescue him! for the love of pity," shrieked the feminine chorus from without, as the sentries advanced to the door, having in custody the man of soft soap; for such was the nickname the crew had bestowed upon him from his manner.

CHAPTER LXIX.

To skirmish with woman is all very fine,
When eyes flash their volleys 'mid music and wine;
But the marquis may have all the glory for me,
When Venus's chickens are 'bent on a spree.'

But however anxious for the examination of Holdout might be the friends of the master from pity, or his enemies from ill-will, this was clear,—"an active but restless minority" viewed such a proceeding with unmitigated dread, and determined to oppose it to the last. The whole bevy of seamen's wives, no small or gentle number, thronged round the four sentries who surrounded the person of the suspected but "popular preacher," and some seizing him by one garment, and some by another, and the sentinel endeavouring to detain him withal, he was soon left in the situation of Joseph of old—a mere man of rags and tatters.

"Let him go! let him go! you butchers; you sha'n't murder the poor lamb!" and many other exclamations equally pressing, and much less polite, were hastily poured forth by the soft intercessors. The blood flowed in little rivulets from the faces of the mutineers, and it became more doubtful which way the goddess of victory would incline, whether to her own sex or to the other. In the mean time there stood Holdout, pale as his shirt collar, and agitated as the crowd that raged around him, —now exhorting, now imploring, to peace or pity, as the conflict turned; mixing up a strange compound of

long-used texts and freshly adopted terms of sea phraseology, making in the whole a language almost as anomalous as his position.

With every passing moment the patience of his guards grew less agreeable, and in proportion as the conduct of the women vexed them, and they felt ashamed to retaliate on a sex which, however gentle, was by no means as gentle as they wished, so in the same ratio they bestowed most heartily on the head of Holdout those blows which they dared not give his friends.

"Within there, in the magazine. Mustapha, Cresswell, ahoy! here, bear a hand, if you don't want your prisoner rescued by the petticoats!"

"To the rescue! to the rescue!" replied the mutineers thus summoned.

Open flew the gates of the magazine—out rushed thirty or forty of the seamen, and making a lane for the captive to press through with his guards, just as a funnel may concentrate the passage of port to a decanter, they contrived to secure the safe entrance of the escorted Holdout, though not without receiving sundry blows, scratches, and other marks of confidence, bestowed upon them by their spouses, most trying indeed to bear, but still taken with wonderfully good temper.

As soon as the prisoner was securely ensconed within the magazine walls, the mutineers raised the cry, "All safe!" The party forming the sortie, no way sorry to hear it, made the best retreat in their power and the women following, and huzzaing, and screaming by way of change, dogged their heels in angry clamour, until the strong but rude gates closing once more, forbade all further intrusion.

But their affectionate efforts were not to end there. If the mutineers themselves were fierce in their passions, and determined in their mode of following them, the female branches of their society could not be held quite free from the dangerous contagion.

"Mercy, you bloodhounds! mercy, you murderers!" screamed some.

Revenge him! revenge the lamb!" cried others

"Pelt them! pelt the hard-hearted blackguards!" suggested a third party, who seemed to possess by far the most practical knowledge of any among the assembly.

The hint was no sooner given than followed. The ground around was strewed with stones, and in a few seconds not an individual of the fair besiegers but was most industriously employed in forwarding this primitive bombardment.

Having but a little distance to cast them, and sure they must take effect, they proceeded with equal facility and courage in their task; for though the stones fell with no more strength than their mere gravity, still this was quite sufficient most entirely to annoy, and discompose a council deliberating on matters of life and death.

As soon as Holdout had been dragged within the magazine-gates, they mounted him on the barrel-top so recently left vacant, the master desiring him at the same time to "turn his mug on the chairman."

As to the elevation, to that he took no objection, nay, rather seemed to hold it as a sort of right; but instead of complying with the very elegant injunction, that, like the man's of Mecca to the Osmanli, would have made him face east, he most imposingly took off that which served him for a hat, whipped it down on the cask-head, remorselessly plunged his knees upon the crown of it, lifted up his clasped hands on high, and began in a tone of grief and distraction, and at broken intervals, as it were, to implore fogiveness for the "unhappy deluded wretches," who stood round

The moment Mustapha's quick eye detected this act of Holdout, kindness for the prisoner at once suggested what would be the effect produced on the rude and ignorant beings standing round. He therefore quickly bawled out, "'Vast heaving there, Methody, none of that! Keep all that for yourself till you get a chance

of being alone, or the signal for your company will be very soon made, either below or aloft, just as the case may be."

To this admonition, meant in the most friendly feeling, Holdout seemed to pay no sort of regard What, therefore, might have been the result, it is somewhat difficult to say. Suddenly, however, commenced the shower of stones and other missiles from the Methody's placid admirers without, and one of these falling upon the very head it was intended to protect gave at once a most touching instance of the futility of human efforts, and the proximate cause for a most tremendous howl which the strikee at once set up, letting fall his hands at the same time upon the injured part of his head, and throwing himself very recklessly off the cask into the arms of such of the nearest bystanders as would be good enough to catch him.

As, however, a Jack Tar is much less accustomed to the fainting-fits of others than to the pressing necessity of taking care of himself, each man no sooner beheld a huge falling bulk like that of Holdout's coming to the ground, than he nimbly jumped out of the way, and left the tumbler at full liberty to reach terra firma at leisure. This he did, and finding no one with inclination sufficient to pick him up, he first indulged in a good roll, and then in a second howl, that might have frightened any set of beings at all more nervous or less engaged than those around him.

But Holdout was not the only one who was wounded. Others had been struck by the same fire. Each of the stricken rubbed his offended noddle in silence, and said nothing; this might be a mere parting volley—a sort of negative averment—something intended simply to show the disapprobation, by the matrons without, of the proceedings of the Benedicts within. But the screams of Holdout, penetrating through the din, had reached the soft ears of the ladies, who renewed their efforts with tenfold vigour; so that when the shower

continued—when volley after volley decended, more and more potent as the injected stones increased in size—when the cheers and the shouting without grew in proportion as the mental intoxication of excitement proceeded, the mutineers could take it in silence no longer.

"Hollea, old Mustaphy! cried they, appealing to their leader, "what the devil are we to do with these petticoats? It will never do to give up our prisoner."

"Give up be d—d," sturdily replied Mustapha; "that'll never do. Jump one of you on the wall, and tell them if they don't give over, we'll hang Methody on a pole as a target for them."

Quick at the word one of the men mounted on the surrounding parapet, and, waving his cap, endeavoured to obtain a hearing.

That which he gained, however, was solely on his own side—the renewed shouts and groans of the besiegers, who, as if they had known part of his summons, began turning the tables by making a butt of him; and he, like other heralds, not liking that his office should be affronted in his person, barely staid to receive the first two or three volleys which were bestowed upon him, then down he dropped; while the soft assailants, more comforted than ever, raised high the pæans of their triumph, and renewed the bombardment with greater force and rapidity than ever.

CHAPTER LXX.

> And when she loves, still less she knows
> Of manhood's baser fears;
> But forms and hearts that scorn at blows
> Will yield too soon to tears.

Unluckily for the mutineers, they fought under every disadvantage. In the first place, their relentless

and untiring foes had the greatest supply of ammunition; *they* themselves possessed none, even if they could have dared to use it. Their persecutors had ample shelter, but did not require any; *they* had need of every covert, but possessed none. The magazine was of course always kept locked, and no one permitted to enter it except when unshod.

"D——it, Mustapha, we can't stand this long," cried one and all, endeavouring to draw their brawny shoulders under the shelter of a very small hat, or squeeze themselves nearer to the surrounding walls, as the ceaseless shower of stones came down.

"Stand it, no—nor anything else; but they'll give it up soon, my boys."

"Not they, old fellow! Don't you hug yourself Here it comes thickerer nor never."

"Holloa there, Mustapha, this won't do!—Give up the beggar to'em; let the women have their Methody again! or we shall die the death of Saint Stephen!"

"Die the death of Tom Pipes' dog!—You don't understand, I see, how to go to war with the petticoats. I'll soon make'em beat a retreat, and make sail on the other tack—dash my wig if I don't! Round there, half a dozen hands, to the other side of the magazine, and rouse out the old rattle-trap of a fire-engine. Come, bear a hand and screw on the short set of pipes. Don't make too much of a row, or they'll twig what we're bent on. Screw on the sucker, drop it into the cistern, and play gently at first, till the hose gets full; then I'll just take the nozzle, and give 'em such a washing, Dear Souls, as they hav'n't had for a week o' Sundays. Now, then, run for it. D—— these stones, they don't fall comfortably at all!"

As old Mustapha concluded these remarks, with the objurgation quoted, he applied his handkerchief to the most prominent feature that adorned his dark visage, now streaming copiously with the ruby flood of life, which one of the ladies' gentle missiles had drawn from

it. Taking the assault, however, as he did everything else, with wonderful coolness and philosophy, he waited till the fire-engine was full charged; then mounting the wall which separated the besieged from the besiegers, he concealed the hose behind him, and made a motion as if to parley.

This, as he expected, only fanned the flame of sedition; the bombardment became stronger than ever, and marking out who were the ringleaders of the attack, he dexterously brought forward the metal-directing tube of his aqueous artillery, gave a signal behind for the seamen to play fast, and indulged the soft and enthusiastic belligerents with such a copious shower, as in a few seconds outbalanced even the love of Holdout, and sent every one of them, drenched to the skin, to seek some less moist employment.

No sooner did the shower of stones cease, and the beleaguered seamen hear the running of their foes, than they raised the shout of triumph—played their engine with renewed vigour—and forgot their damaged sconces in the gratification of victory.

"Here, my lads," cried Mustapha, "jump up one of ye, and take charge of this hose. If the enemy heaves in sight again, give us a signal to recommence firing; and now, my boys, pop that ere Methody up on the cask again. If we look sharp, we may try and sentence the beggars while the light craft are bending new sails."

"Bravo, my hearty!" was the ready response of the crew; and with wonderful alacrity the shivering Holdout was once more placed on the caskhead, and silence was called in court for the trial to proceed.

"Gentlemen—gentlemen!" cried the prisoner, in a tone markedly altered from that in which he last addressed them, "is there no case in which you would—you—you —*could* extend your mercy?" (Here there was a dead pause; every one wondered what was coming.) "I mean, gentlemen," renewed Holdout—"I mean, gentlemen, in case—you understand me—in case—there—

there was anything I could—confess—gentlemen; that's all."

"The beggar's going to peach!" cried the crew, as soon as they took in the meaning of this hesitating appeal.

"Why," replied old Mustapha, "if your mode o' doing business will let you be so big a blackguard as that, and you've got anything worth peaching about, perhaps we may let you off."

"Oh, sir, my conscience wouldna let me involve a fellow-creature in sin, maybe on an *uncertainty*."

"Oh, now, if it's only your conscience is onaisy, my boy, I'll soon give ye absolution!" replied an Irish captain of the afterguard, flourishing a shillelagh almost as big as himself.

"Oh, promise it to the varmint for a certainty, Mustapha," cried the crew, "and then we can give the women back their Methody. 'Tisn't much live stock they have on the island, that we should go to distress them of such a scabby sheep as that."

"Confess! confess!" shouted others from all parts of the crowd.

"We promise," said Mustapha; "now go on."

"Well, gentlemen, since you see with me the reasonable necessity of this plan, you must know, the master, ten months back, asked me if I'd help him to get away from the island; and having ties at home——"

"D—— your ties, you desarve a knot, you villain; go on without that sort of humbug."

"Certainly, gentlemen—certainly, if you'll give me patience; so the Master said, if I'd write out the description of the island, and so forth, from his wording, he'd seal the bottles and fling them out to sea, and by this means you see that he might deny he ever *wrote* a syllable, and *I* might deny I ever saw a bottle; and we determined to send one bottle to sea the first day of every month, which I believe he did."

A burst of anger followed this information from all

parts of the crowded auditory, and then the question—"Is that all?"

"That's all, gentlemen, upon my most solemn honour."

"Take that for your honour," was the instantaneous rejoinder, accompanied by a shower of stones from all sides, that fairly knocked the prisoner off his perch, which he, no ways encouraged thereby to mount again, did not seek to regain, but sneaked out through the gates of the magazine-yard as quickly as the numerous kicks he received would allow him to do.

CHAPTER LXXI

"Vain is the hope, by dint of force or skill,
To stem the torrent of a woman's will;
For if she will she will, you may depend on't,
And if she wont she wont, and there's an end on't."

No sooner was the attention of the mutineers disengaged from the object of their detestation, than the fatal demand of "sentence" was heard in fierce reiteration from every lip. At first Mustapha was in hopes that he could have obtained for the master at least a second hearing, to show, if possible, that Holdout had spoken falsely; but this he had no sooner proposed, than he saw at once how little the government of popular assemblies can at all times be insured.

"Sentence! sentence!" was the only answer given him, and that in such a tone and temper as marks the hungry lion asking for his food. Seeing it would only defeat his own object to hold out, he contented himself with sending off to the master to ask what he had to say to the confession of his accomplice, and then proceeded to take the sentence in the usual way.

"Sentence.—Now, my boys, such of you as think this charge against the master not brought close enough home, put up your hands!"

A dead silence ensued, Mustapha lifted his right arm,

and two others in different parts of the crowd did the same.

"Those who think the charge proved, hold up *their* flippers, and cry the sentence."

In an instant, a little forest of sturdy limbs was raised in air, and the hopeless doom of "Death!" rang forth with a degree of energy and triumph enough to try the nerves of the most courageous victim.

At this moment Mustapha's messenger returned.

"Well," said the old fellow, not yet despairing of assisting the officer who had so often conned him at the wheel, and cheered his night watches with a glass of grog, "what can the master do about that thief of a Methody? can he clear it all up? What does he say?"

"He says he's done his duty!"

"Lord love him! if he says that—he's nothing more left to say now but his prayers. The Dutchman himself couldn't save him."

"So I told him, but he only blackguarded me for my pains."

"More's the pity; but since he will have it so, just step over to him, with my respectful compliments, and ax how he'd like to have it. I suppose he'll take it neat—powder and ball—true blue, like a chip of the old block. I may be of a little use to him in that line, if he's any very particular fancy; though I must say 'tis a precious sell to be done brown and dead by a Methody; and the worst o'it is, there's nothing shipshape in the matter."

"Ay, ay, quartermaster. I'll let him understand, though the crusty old tartar is in a regular tin-pot humour just now, I warrant ye."

"Never mind that—start and bear ahand back again. Now, shipmates," turning once more to his brother mutineers, "since you believe as how you're bound to give this old officer a free passage to Fiddler's Green, I suppose you don't mind giving him his choice what time and boat he'll embark in."

"*Ahoy there, Mustapha; shipmates, ahoy below there!* By all that's treason and blue murder, the master's done yè after all!"

"Halloo! what's in the wind now?" replied half a dozen voices, in answer to this sudden and disturbing summons, addressed by one of the mutineers, who, having left the assembled seamen in the courtyard of the magazine, had by mere chance mounted up to the sort of observatory on the top of the citadel, which commanded a view of the sea, and there beheld a sight which not only gave rise to the exclamations already recorded, but seemed to leave their utterer in such a state of bewilderment as to take away from him the power of further exclamation, and there he remained as if rooted to the rock, a few yards above the spot occupied by Mustapha: his arms extended in an attitude of astonishment, and both mouth and eyes stretched to the widest extent, and no slight expression of horror mingled with surprise.

As it was clear that something most unusual had occurred, which the observer seemed unable either to relate or explain, the resource of judging for themselves appeared at once to present itself to the minds of all. A general rush was made for that which served as the highest rampart of the rock, and there, to the dismay of the pirates, was a squadron of five ships of war, bearing down with every stitch of canvass set, direct for the island, they being nearly in the wind's eye, and now at a distance little exceeding six miles, and rapidly diminishing with every instant.

The whole effect was so sudden, so like that which may be supposed the result of magic, that for some seconds not a word was spoken. Then, as if holding but one sentiment, the cry was, "We may thank the master for this."

"Stay, cried Mustapha: "not so fast at any rate, don't let us thank ourselves for seconding him. This squadron may not know this island's inhabited, and

merely be passing by. Down below every man of us, and let us watch them from one of the seaward galleries of the rock, where we can't be seen. For anything we can tell, they may only be wanting water, and if they see no trace of the island being inhabited, they'll give our jolly coral reefs a clear berth precious quickly."

Swift as the word, every mutineer ducked his head, and jumping down below, from the platform which exposed their persons to the clearest vision, by placing them in relief against the clear sky, they followed Mustapha's advice and example by seeking one of those chambered galleries, some few feet lower down the rock, where an original chasm, left by nature, had been improved by their arts into a covered battery, the loopholes of which, invisible from the sea, completely commanded it on every side, and allowed those within to examine, from the rugged port-holes left for the guns, whatever was passing below.

Some few minutes elapsed before the mutineers gained this post of secret observation; and no sooner had they rushed to the open spaces opposite the muzzles of their cannon, than they perceived that the approaching squadron had shortened sail and hove to, at something very little better than three miles, being just two miles beyond the reefs.

It was a moment of deep suspense. Not a spectator there but felt that the whole of his destiny for life or death depended on the motions of those ships. A quick review of their past lives, and the late events that marked and endangered them, seemed to flash unbidden before the minds of the boldest, while they left a cold dead weight upon the hearts of those more timid.

For a brief space the outrageous daring of their characters seemed lost or abashed; they spoke only in whispers, as knots of ten or twelve eagerly gathered at each port-hole; the foremost not daring to be seen, and those in the rear pressing forward with an intense excitement, which seemed to dread that anything should be lost.

"This looks suspicious, Mustapha, doesn't it?" muttered one of the subordinate chiefs.

The old man shook his head, drew a long breath, and in the same tone replied, "We shall see more of that by-and-bye."

Scarcely had the words left his lips, when forth flashed a gun from the bows of the leading seventy-four; the fatal whizzing of a shot was indistinctly heard to follow the rumbling thunder, and when the iron ploughed up for itself a bed within the smoother circlet of waters inside the reef, a large blue flag rose rapidly to the peak of every vessel, bearing the union of St. George. At the same time a plain triangular piece of bunting, broken from its stops at the leading line of battle ship's main-top gallantmast head, proclaimed the squadron to be commanded by a commodore of Great Britain.

As this unequivocal demonstration met the sight of those who watched so anxiously within, a deep groan bursting forth seemed to give some relief to their surcharged bosoms.

"Well, Mustapha, my boy," said one, there's no mistaking that!—What's to be done now?"

"What's to be done now?—Why, everything to be sure! Pull devil—pull baker; the fun's just beginning. Ha! what's that?"

"A cheer to be sure, and just below, too," replied some of the men.

Those who were nearest the port-holes here peered forth to reconnoitre, and in one of the open galleries below stood the whole posse comitatus of the fair storming party, so lately routed from above, and now engaged, one and all, in waving scarfs, ribbons, handkerchiefs, and every other conspicuous token by which the ladies are accustomed to signify their approving presence.

A volley of oaths and execrations followed the witnessing of this sight, and, with an exclamation of their belief that it was to the master they were indebted for this further developement of his plot, they one all

rushed from the chamber-battery back to the barracks, in which their prisoner was confined.

CHAPTER LXXII.

"A darker departure is near,
And muffled the death-drum, and ready the bier."
CAMPBELL.

FEARFUL, from the symptoms of uncontrollable fury which he now observed in his comrades, that they were likely to be betrayed into some violence, Mustapha rushed after their rapid footsteps, in hopes of calming, or at least directing, the torrent of their fury.

Vain anticipation! On reaching the square he found the master already in the power of the crew, who, binding him hand and foot, despite all remonstrance, flatly refused to listen to any interference their old delegate could make, and now only deliberated on the severest penalty in their power.

Death, it is true, was the sentence. What that death should be was the question. Revenge on the culprit, and defiance to his friends on board the squadron, were the only two objects now sought to be gained. While their victim lay bound amongst them, heaping every term of obloquy and reproach upon their lives, they repaid the compliment by debating at full length how they should destroy his.

Some proposed one mode—some another. At last an idea was started that seemed to meet the savage fierceness of their wrath, and, after various whisperings among themselves, they proceeded to carry their terrible resolve into execution.

In this, it is but justice to Mustapha, and some of his older shipmates, to declare that he had no hand. Uttering a strong but wholly disregarded and equally futile protest, he withdrew to a corner of the platform, and sorrowfully regarded that which he had no power to

prevent: nay, more, he plainly perceived that any attempt at more energetic interference would not only be without the least benefit in this immediate instance, but lead in all probability, to the utter downfall of what slight authority he still possessed over their infuriated minds, and which might otherwise be beneficially exerted, at some more opportune moment, for the preservation of them all.

Still he could not help mourning the fate of the gallant and determined old master; a feeling mitigated, it is true, by the consciousness that the officer in question had little right to expect other treatment at the hands of the mutineers. He had endeavoured to destroy them by superior ingenuity. He knew the penalty of failure from the first, and having failed, must now expect the consequences; yet, notwithstanding all, the dauntless bravery with which he met his fate—the courageous obstinacy with which he denounced the conduct and defied the power of the mutineers could not but raise many emotions of pity and regret among the veterans, who refused to have any share in his death, though unable to save him. Qualities like these always have, and ever will possess, the most commanding influence over men trained by long discipline and use to feats of arms. At the same time they could not deny that the proofs of his guilt were conclusive; and if the community meant to struggle any further for existence, the master's death was unavoidable, not only as a punishment for the past, but to deter traitors for the future.

These feelings, then, induced them to attempt nothing further by way of interference, and no time was lost by the mutineers in executing their intentions.

The reader is already aware of the enormous height of the rocky fortress, a form of nature which has been found in various parts of the globe, with slightly different modifications, and which the ancients, after building round and over it, have recognised under the designation of "Acropolis." While a small party was left to guard

the helpless but stout-hearted master, the rest advanced near that edge of the cliff that faced the sea, and where it shot down so many hundred feet, without break or ledge sufficient to interrupt anything in its descent.

Four feet inwards from the dizzy brink, a small hole was cut in the rock by three men with pickaxes, while a dozen more helped to bear along a couple of strong poles, followed by others with some stout rope.

Where the master had been laid, his eyes could fully command these operations; and ceasing a few minutes from his violent upraidings, he watched with unshrinking aspect those proceedings of his enemies which he knew were speedily to terminate his existence.

He was not long left in suspense. In the course of ten minutes he perceived swinging over the frightful abyss a machine, by sailors termed a derrick, which is simply a rude kind of crane used for the purpose of hoisting up weights over any perpendicular height, and formed of two spars, one resting on the ground, and secured by stays from the head like the ropes of a tent, while the second spar, crossing at an acute angle, projects to a distance, and is so fastened to the upright pole as to swing round to any point desired.

"Curse ye, you scoundrels!" cried the master, losing somewhat of his equanimity when he beheld what he conceived to be the intentions of the mutineers, "ye might as well have given me a sailor's death, instead of hanging an auld blue jacket like a collie dog."

The only notice, however, that was taken of these remarks, was to raise the unfortunate maker of them, as soon as the preparations were finished, and to bear him towards the foot of the crane, despite of all his struggles.

Here a brief pause was allowed, while a rope, which had been rove through a small block at the point of the crane, was passed underneath both arms of the master, and firmly knotted behind his back. The slack was then hauled in, and the other end of the rope handed

along to some fifty of the mutineers, who ranged in a row behind, awaited but the whistle of the boatswains' mate to run the condemned officer up to the block.

Firmly, but with sad and terrible intensity the master's small black eye travelled from this iron band of his former shipmates to the point of the crane. The whole power of vision seemed, despite himself, to be exhausted in a futile endeavour to discern what fate was in store for him, as the white eyeball, distinctly perceptible above the pupil, threw back, in vain but desperate ferocity, that light of heaven that was so soon to pass from its gaze for ever. The lips were pale, but the firm setting with which they were closed bespoke the undying courage of his heart, while the rigid muscles of the hard worn face, and the distended nostrils snorting in frightful excitement of body which the mind, however willing, was unable to master, all bespoke the last extremity of a daring and impetuous spirit.

At this awful moment not a sound was heard but the loud boiling of the ocean on those barrier reefs, which kept eternal watch and ward arround the island. They fell heavily upon the ear of the bound and helpless master, and, like the voice of some fatal witness in the ear of a condemned prisoner, must have brought home to the conviction of the hearer that it was by their agency he was to die. Yet, in the midst of all the agony of that moment, something like a smile for an instant unclosed the fixed line around his lips—something like a tear gathered on his distended eyelids. That sea whose music had been the melody of a whole life, whose murmur had soothed him to slumber from his childhood, whose waves had given him a home through every adversity—the self-same grateful song was ringing in his ear—so soon to close in mute forgetfulness. Did no scene of childhood—no thoughts of early friends pass over him—he who now possessed not one to shelter or comfort him on earth?

The breeze swept freshly from the bright and glorious

sea. A few minutes since, and it had traversed the decks, and borne the words of those who came to succour and to save him; now it whispered mournfully among the scanty herbage on which his fevered head was lying. A few seconds more, and he should become less animated than those parched blades of grass.

From the solemn reverie—whatever it might be—in which the unhappy master was plunged, the sound of approaching footsteps aroused him. Turning his eyes in the direction of the noise he beheld Holdout approaching, accompanied by one of the ringleaders of the mutineers.

"Master!" said the latter, while some of the respect of former days and overthrown discipline seemed involuntarily to steal into the seaman's manner, "you are bound for the last cruise. Is there anything you would wish of the only parson we have to offer you? After the trick you've sarved us, d'ye see, we can't save your life if we would, but we're all willing to make your start as comfortable as we can. If you've anything to ease your mind of to Holdout, you may do it; and if so be you wish to see your wife——"

"Begone, you scoundrel, and do your worst," interrupted the master, "and take with you yon thrice dyed rascal at your shou'ther. A brave man never yet wanted a traitor like that beside him, when death was near, to be both a better and a truer friend."

"Consider, my beloved!" interposed Holdout.

"Don't ca' me beloved, or any ither of your nicknames, you arch lim o' the muckle de'il; I want nane of your low practical jokes at an hour like this. If ye ever knew what mercy meant, be gone!"

"Mercy! oh! would I could bring it to you, master," replied Holdout, throwing himself on his knees beside the prisoner.

"Come not near me, you villain; come not nigh me, you incarnation of a' lees. Keep off, I say—keep off;" and after an ineffectual struggle, first to strike at, and

then to avoid him, the helpless master seemed to gather all his strength to make a last and futile effort to display his contempt and rage; and having spat in the face of the kneeler, he turned away his head and closed his eyes.

"Master! master!" exclaimed the other, in a voice of the deepest and most passionate entreaty, without rising from his position; "hear me, I implore you, for the love of that God before whom we must one day both appear—hear me, if only for a moment. I come not to disturb your dying moments—I come not as a pastor to one far better than myself—I come as a repentant, guilty friend, to implore your forgiveness for what I have done. The love of life was strong within me, and I yielded to it! Remember I did not seek you at the first of this matter; remember how I told you I was a weak, timid coward, unfit to deal in anything of the kind; remember how I urged you not to involve me—not to trust me. A moment before I betrayed you, I thought nothing on earth should force the secret from me; but the fear of death was worse than madness. You do not speak—you do not answer me!—I ask only for your pardon, and you yourself must seek that from your Maker. I know too well what a Judas I have been. My best friend—the only man in the island who was really kind to me—whom I thought I could have died to save, and whose death, instead, I have made the price of my own base safety,—have you not one word of forgiveness for such a wretch, to cheer the long life of repentance before him?"

At this frantic appeal, which was breathed in so low a tone as to be inaudible to every ear but the one to which it was so passionately addressed, the workings of the master's features plainly proved the struggle that was going on within. At last, slowly turning round his head, and fixing his glance on Holdout's face, he seemed to bend his whole soul to the effort of deciding what degree of credence should be given to his address. The attitude

—the clasped hands—the tear-dewed face of horrible remorse, allowed of little doubt.

"You are right," said the master, quickly closing his eyes once more, as if to exclude so frightful an object; "my death will be nothing to your life. There—take what you ask, and go before I recal it. I forgive God's creature, for he made it weak; whether I can forgive myself for trusting it, is another matter. If ever ye should live to tread the bonny shores of Clyde again, ye'll may-be seek out my kin, and say I died in my duty. Above a', ye'll not forget to tell my brither, or his sons, there's a year and a half's pay due at Christmas last past, besides prize-money. Then," muttering to himself, "there's my widow's pension too, but she'll not get that, I'm thinking, for want of proving the marriage." Then, again, aloud—"Leave me, sir, now; and tell the mutinous scoundrels they may work their warst."

"God bless you," inarticulately replied Holdout, "will do all you have told me;" and bending down his lips to the master's hands, he arose and hurried from observation, to indulge in private the remorse with which he was consumed.

"Is there anything else, master?" said the ringleader, approaching.

"Nothing but to die," was the brief reply.

The seaman lingered a few seconds, as if even he were touched with irresolution. If so, it was of short duration: retiring to the head of the crew, a brief whistle was heard—the long line of revengeful-looking faces darted into rapid motion—and away rose the body of the master from the brink of the cliff, where it had before been lying, to the armspoint of the crane. A second pipe was then heard—the rope was made fast on a cleat affixed to the upright spar, and the master remained suspended over the frightful void beneath.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

And sighs the night breeze rising o'er the lea,
Rich with the wailing music of the sea.

During the time occupied by the scene related in the last chapter, the English squadron had not been idle. The incessant look-out ever kept on board our ships of war had long since informed them that something unusual was proceeding on the summit of that huge rock that rose so threateningly above all around it. Believing, from the cheering of the women, whom they had plainly beheld half way down its rugged sides, that some movement in their favour was going forward on the part of the loyal prisoners, the commanding officer made the signal to crowd all sail. When, therefore, the figure of the master, who had been dressed in his uniform, was seen to swing aloft, as they at first believed, hanging, the whole squadron had approached as near to the reefs as their safety permitted, and, shortening sail, had there hove to.

The moment their glasses enabled them to perceive that the master was suspended alive, and not hung by the neck, some of the largest boats of the squadron were hoisted out, quickly manned and armed and sent ashore, with the vain hope of effecting a rescue.

In the document which had been the occasion of this expedition to reduce the stronghold of the mutineers, the reefs had been as accurately described as possible, and not only a sketch given of them, but the passage laid down in a chart, and the buoys indicated as well as the master had been able to do. Instead, however, of the officer in command of the boats making for the indicated spot, he allowed himself to be misled by the deceptive appearance of the reef, and, hoping to take the shortest road, dashed direct for the nearest landing-point.

Long and loud was the laugh of the mutineers as they beheld this act of insanity A brief consultation was

held among themselves, and while a small party remained near the crane by which the master was suspended, a large body hurried to the highest tiers of guns, and began to train them ready for firing.

Swiftly and daringly the boats of the squadron pulled on—the officers standing up in the stern-sheets, now waving their swords, which flashed brightly in the declining sun, now cheering the men onwards with their caps which they took off and swung round to their loud huzzas, that were heard even on the highest point of the citadel; while the lee riggings of the squadron, swarming with their crews, returned the cheers, and spurred them on.

At this instant the leading pinnace shot into one of the fallacious passages of the reef, and as it did so, the lieutenant, who led the party, cut down the union-jack from the little flagstaff astern, and rapidly wrapped it round his body. With renewed efforts the rest of the boats gathered close in his wake, and away they came, dashing through the troubled waters, boiling round them, with all the swiftness of a swan, when, with ruffled plumes and threatening wing, she rushes to the assistance of her young.

At this moment a crimson light flashed from the summit of the citadel—a lurid cloud of smoke obscured the slanting rays of the sun—the whizzing of a heavy volley of shot drowned every other voice—and when the canopy of smoke was lifted by the sea-breeze, long streaks of angry foam were seen darting out along the waves, from the direction of the fortress, amongst and even beyond the squadron, while, of all the boats so lately seen in the armed pride of war, only three were distinguishable. Fragments of the rest were tossing here and there, black specks amidst the fleecy surface of the breakers, while momentarily appeared the outline of a human form—now black, now red, as either sailor or marine appeared struggling with the remorseless gripe of death. Occasionally, the streak of a cut-

lass or a bayonet, or the shining surface of a gun-barrel, caught the sun, as it was thrown up by the surges on the coral, and was then lost for ever.

One by one the commanding guns of the mutineers now opened on the remaining boats—mere targets—mere shooting marks to those who derided, even while they destroyed them. Too soon and too keenly did the officers of the squadron feel the difficulties of the undertaking which they sought to accomplish, as, in addition to all the obstacles which nature placed in their path, they beheld the singular precision with which the mutineers fired. The third shot struck the quarter of the largest remaining boat; her rudder injured, the steerage became impossible; in another second she was on the reefs, and in the third the whole of her crew were engulphed in the raging waters that had already swallowed so many.

The barge that was immediately following, stopped to pick up some of the men; five or six guns from the fortress instantly poured down their deadly volleys, and when the smoke rolled off, one solitary remaining boat alone was visible, and she, with many of her crew wounded, was pulling, for the lives of those on board, for the squadron. Unwilling to risk the reputation of their firing, by trying to hit a mark that was already beyond fair aim, or thinking it wise to allow that some should live to dishearten their shipmates by telling the horrors of the reef, the mutineers forbore any further fire. The remainder of the attacking party was allowed to regain their ship in safety.

The guns once more secured, the mutineers again gathered round the crane where the unhappy master was still suspended, awaiting the last act of the tragedy. Not a sound nor a sign had escaped him, from the first moment of his being placed in that horrible position till now. Calmly he had looked down on the giddy depth beneath him, and then, with equal composure, fixing his eyes upon the squadron, he had seen the slaughter

of his friends, and the discomfiture of their efforts in his behalf. Slowly the wind every now and then swayed him to and fro, but he ceased not to fix his eyes on the king's vessels; and though the galling of the ropes beneath his arms must have gradually grown most painful, not even in look would he allow any intimation of this fact to escape.

At last he saw that his moment had arrived. The mutineers gathered round the base of the crane in a large semicircle, while one stood immediately at its foot armed with a sharp tomahawk; and he who throughout had acted as the ringleader in the matter of his execution, seemed watching the gradual setting of the sun.

Already the large broad disk was seen to touch with its lower segment the dark blue line of the distant horizon. Its ruddy golden light swept in a clear broad stream the rising masses of the sea, as they alternately sank and swelled, ribbed with the glorious fire of his beams. The broad gigantic mass of the citadel came out boldly in the expiring light, while the whole of the beauteous plain below lay in deep shadow and repose.

One object in particular was pre-eminently conspicuous in the view thus brought out—it was the body of the master. Stern to the last pitch of daring, but calmly composed as ever, his eyes also were set upon that luminary whose decline seemed to be marked as the signal for his death. Somewhat to windward of the squadron, its disk gradually sank lower and lower in the waves, lighting the lofty canvass of the men of war, as its beams travelled towards the master, while the sands of his own glass kept pace with the sinking luminary. Every telescope on board the squadron was fixed on this sad point of vision.

"Now, then," said the ringleader, who saw that more than half of the sun's globe was already hidden, "count ten, and then cut away the tackle."

The seaman with the tomahawk lifted his deadly

weapon. "*One*," said, he, begining to count slowly—"*two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine——*"

"God save my country, and confound all traitors!" firmly interposed the master.

"*Ten*," cried the seaman. He pronounced the last number slowly, and looked for a moment to the ringleader, amid the breathless suspense of all around.

Not a word was uttered in reply, but a mute motion of assent was seen. The tomahawk flashed in the latest gleam of the sun—a dull heavy stroke was heard—away whistled the rope through the block—the dark form of the master darted with the swiftness of a thunder-bolt into the awful void beneath; and when the eyes of the excited spectators next looked at the arm of the crane, nothing but the empty block was there, while the rising night-breeze sighed mournfully as it wailed through the vacant sheave-hole.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Mortal, beware!—tho' Samson could impart
His strength of limb, and Cæsar nerve thy heart;
Tho' all the guile of Talleyrand be thine,
Tho' Curran's speech and Chatham's spirit shine
In ev'ry word and thought; tho' worth as great
As godlike Washington's adorn thy state,
Trust not the crowd, to seize or shake a throne,
Nor hope to soar where sank Napoleon!

When we last quitted the crew of the Flying Dutchman, consternation and its sure attendants indecision and disobedience, had overthrown the last bonds of union among her men. With every anxious longing to regain their homes, redoubled by the perils that had threatened for ever to exclude them, the mutineers found as we have before related, their island blockaded, and themselves shut out by a far superior force. Having drawn off to windward, to consider what line of conduct they should adopt, the sun gradually sank behind the waves, leaving them a prey to every anxiety

As the dangers thickened around the pirates, the more loud became their complaints against the chief of their own selection. Still they seemed unable to make a better choice, as the corporal was indifferent to their discontent, and resolute to maintain his sway. His decision was formed.

When evening fell, and the breeze freshened, all sail crowded to make their port, and break the beleaguerers' blockade under cover of the night.

Not that the corporal underrated in the least degree the imminent peril of the attempt to pass, in the teeth of an opposing enemy, reefs so terrible as those which surrounded the island. On the contrary, none knew better that it was almost a certain act of destruction to such as had not studied the pilotage with the utmost nicety. Still this appeared to him the only chance, and he was determined to stake all upon it.

For fear of traitors, few of the mutineers were allowed to know the marks for going in—these being chiefly confined to the corporal and his juniors in command. Placing himself at the helm on the night in question, and bracing all his energies to the task, he proposed to try the *ruse* of the Flying Dutchman; but the conscience-stricken seamen, horrified at the idea refused to execute an order, if he should persist in such an intention. Enraged, but helpless, he had to trust to the ordinary chances of war, and endeavoured to gain the secure and landlocked harbour of the island with as little loss as possible.

How naturally, when life seems drawing to a close, or some exciting crisis is at hand—when death, love, or fiery ambition, throwing their deep shade upon our souls, call forth the strongest emotions of the heart—how naturally we turn to the sublime vault, that, like our destiny, at once allures our gaze and defies our scrutiny.

The corporal sighed heavily as he looked up that night towards the deep blue heaven, set with its un-

numbered brilliants. The breeze swept freshly by him, as he stood on the quarterdeck gun-carriage, and the dark bright waters flashed with perpetual light, as the wind, bearing full on the frigate's quarter, urged her rapidly towards the beleaguered island.

The deep cast of night shrouded almost every object in complete gloom, save here and there, where the darkness was rendered more powerful by the slight specks of light reflected from the young moon, by a pike or bayonet, or piece of polished brass around the deck, or was for a second imaged forth on the brilliant crest of an advancing wave. For a moment—ship—friends—foes—all seemed forgotten. In that brief space, what distance might not the mind traverse? what time might it not review?

The trance soon closed. With an exclamation, addressed to the helmsman, he seemed by an effort to banish all futile regrets, and addressing himself to the emergency of the hour. Nothing could be better for his purpose than the night which Fortune had given him. The heat of the day had left a long line of vapour on the horizon, through which were dimly discoverable, with strong glasses, the tapering spars of the hostile squadron, while the island itself appeared lifted above the water, and broken into several parts by the refraction.

With every stitch of sail set below, and as little as possible aloft, for the sake of concealment, the Flying Dutchman bore towards her dangerous home. As she approached its dreaded shores, the land gradually sank into the mist that surrounded it, while the hulls of the government vessels loomed vast and dim.

To any mind less firm than that of the corporal, the undertaking would have appeared insanity of the worst description. But he who undertook, understood too well how much depended on the issue. Not a tremor could be detected in his voice, as he gave the necessary orders in a low and subdued tone, just loud enough to be heard, and nothing more. Not an action denoting

the least hesitation could have been detected in any movement, as he quietly took the wheel into his own hands when the ship approached the reefs.

The bells of the blockading squadron struck two o'clock as the swift vessel entered into the same belt of fog as that which surrounded them. The loud thunder of the surf rose, swelling more and more powerfully upon the ear with every passing moment. Everything on board was silent, as if the frigate had indeed been the fabled spectre ship. Her crew were all at quarters, and each man at his gun could hear every heavy breath drawn by his fellow-seamen, as they approached the perilous passage: besides this, the breaking of the waves, the rushing of the wind, the occasional groaning of a spar, or the short, sharp complaining of a tiller rope-block, all on board was still as the abode of death.

Presently the fog lifted a little, and the tall, vast summit of the abrupt citadel showed itself like some gigantic sentinel that watched amid every danger. The corporal saw his moment. In an instant the bearings were taken—down went the helm. A wave of the hand, and the lee-braces were quickly, but gently, hauled though their well-greased blocks. Obedient as a well-trained Arab, the noble frigate shot along her altered course. Already was she within and to windward of the blockading squadron—already did her swift but impatient bow seem entering on the dangerous but welcome circle of troubled foam—already did her wearied and excited crew believe that home once more opened all its joys to welcome back its wanderers—when flash came a sudden blaze from their lee quarter.

The shot whistled idly between their main and mizen masts, while the momentary light revealed the form of the weathermost frigate of the British squadron, within few yards, hove to under double reefed topsails. A shrill whistle was heard on board her, and then distinctly every word of the succeeding pipe, "All hands to quarters—make sail!"

The alarm once given—flash after flash burst from the bows of the more distant squadron, and the same shrill whistle followed on board each ship, lessening gradually into the distance.

Nor were the mutineers on shore less alert. The heavier thunder of their batteries, which commanded everything like a passage in the reefs, was quickly heard in answer, and the deadly shot came ricochetting along the water, threatening far more damage from its low level sweep, than any from the squadron.

"Steady, my boys; no firing. Wait the word of command. Flat on the decks all of you but the sail-trimmers," were the words now heard in the unvarying voice of the corporal, amid all the confusion of the scene.

Determined to give no hint to his enemies of what was his exact position, he resolved not to open a single gun, but steadily bore on for his opening. Already the bow of the Flying Dutchman was within it. Yet no; could it be so? Surely he had not mistaken. But where were the buoys! A moment's error, and every soul on board was lost!—The furious surf raged and boiled around him—the gallant ship, urged by a full press of sail, swept on with almost the swiftness of an arrow—still the weathermost frigate of his foes pressed hard in his wake, making every stitch of sail, and discharging gun after gun at his stern—still the remainder of his enemies followed up the attack with unintermitting blaze.—Several of his men were falling around him; splinters were flying around him; the tackle and gear disabled and cut away at every shot. Still, with the iron-heartedness of nerve, he stood in the weather mizen rigging, looking for the well-remembered marks—the buoys he had himself laid down—regardless of all beside, and expecting every instant to feel the final shock, when his ship striking on the reef, should seal the doom of all on board. At this instant, as if to complete his perils, the mutineers opened their heaviest

battery from the land full on the bows of the frigate. Without faltering for an instant, thought seemed to advance the more resolutely to his aid, in proportion as misfortune pressed him hardest.

"That must be it!" cried he, as if addressing the man at the wheel. "They must have taken up the buoys themselves to prevent surprise, and now mistake this for a sham action of the enemy's. On the forecastle there—quick—burn a blue light on the lee cathead. Jump to your guns, my boys, and give it to the frigate astern."

With an alacrity that evinced the pleasure of obedience, these orders were obeyed. The mutineers ashore, seeing the signal of their chief, acknowledged it with three cheers, which, however, were unheard afloat, and directing all their fire on the chasing frigate, which they were easily enabled to do by the blaze of the Flying Dutchman's guns, the latter ship wound swiftly among the intricacies of the passage,—a few more yards would clear her. This also her opponent saw. With the most gallant determination and skill she had followed the Dutchman—only a single turn in the reef lay between her and the accomplishment of its perilous passage. Every sail she could venture to show was set. The captain and the master at the conn and the helm cheered each other on. That passage once achieved, and the island would be won. Everything depended on it. In vain came the shot,—in vain the angry surges hissed and howled around them. The enemy had piloted the way, and too well and too truly had they followed. Another turn—a few more yards —so, there she was—the point was gained. Three cheers—huzza!

The second shout of triumph was yet upon their lips, when four guns, double shotted, opened their terrific and united fire from the shore. They had only waited till the intervening hull of the Flying Dutchman was withdrawn. Away came the fatal shower, skipping

from crest to crest of the waves, hitting here and there the point of some coral rock, and reducing the obstacle into mere powder in their path. Crash, like some heavy long-continued blow, it fell on the figure-head of the frigate. Suddenly her huge bowsprit yielded as if to some unseen influence, and, dropping like a log to leeward, floated alongside; while scarcely had it reached this point, when the whole mass of sail upon the foremast seemed gradually driven aft, and then overboard. Her bow came up in the wind, her counter backed upon the coral, and in a few seconds she was broadside to upon the reef, and the heavy seas were washing over her. Then arose the shrieks which all could hear, but none relieve—the cries for help, understood at once, but never to be answered. Boats were cut away to live but for a second, and the slight remains of rigging became crowded with life, that only prolonged for a few seconds the dissolution overtaking it! the sharp edges of the coral cut through the frigate's timbers with rapidity inconceivable. She gradually righted; then as suddenly careening on the other side, her graceful masts once more moved as if to meet the waves, when suddenly down went the hull, with all the crowd of human beings on it, a hundred fathoms deep; and in another moment not a wreck was to be seen. Masts—rigging—spars—all were swallowed up in the horrid whirl of waters, while the horror-stricken squadron, as daylight began to glimmer, drew off to a more secure distance, and the daring Dutchman, more fortunate in the issue of her perils, securely glided onward towards the haven her commander had long since so admirably chosen for her refuge.

Mustapha, who had been left in command of the island during the corporal's absence, came on board the frigate as she cast anchor, and from himself and boat's crew the history of the ominous blockade was learned. After the melancholy catastrophe which attended the attempted landing by boats to save the master, no less

than three similar efforts had been made to pass the reefs, and all with equal success: the reef, like a labyrinth on shore, perplexed them more to escape from the surrounding maze than it led them near the desired shore.

The only practicable spots, on the other hand, were so guarded and commanded by heavy batteries, composed of ships' guns taken at sea, that no boats could survive their fire for ten minutes.

In these three unsuccessful attempts, then, the blockaders had lost a very considerable number of men, and began almost to despair of effecting their end, unless starvation or the want of stores should assist them.

But of this, being afloat, the mutineers were of course ignorant, and the consciousness of evil deeds seemed to weigh so heavily on them as greatly to diminish their resources in their own eyes, and swell the power of their enemies. The very sight of the British flag, which they had always been accustomed to see victorious in every encounter, now floating in haughty wrath against themselves, inclined them, notwithstanding the impregnable strength of their position, to give themselves greatly to despair. Such were the feelings, then, with which the corporal had to combat; and certainly if anything could have reassured the blockaded party, it was the reappearance of their daring leader.

CHAPTER LXXV.

Even man, with his treacherous smile,
Conveys a delight to the heart,
Though safer is solitude's isle,
Than the palace adorned by his art;
For his soul is the creature of change,
To possess is to value no more,
And the lust of his mind takes a range,
Like the wind kissing every shore.

THE delight of Ramsay was great in the extreme when, on landing, he found himself restored to the so-

ciety of his brother officers, and many other passengers and gentlemen of various descriptions, who had been taken at different times by the Flying Dutchman's crew, and were allowed to go at large on the island.

With a degree of good sense and feeling that shone brightly out beside the darker shades of his character, the corporal had not attempted to wring from these men even that doubtful parole which would have been but a poor guarantee to the mutineers, and a sad stumbling-block to the officers themselves, if by any accident they should be restored to their country.

Telling them that instant death would be the penalty of any attempt to escape, intrigue, or cabal against the safety of the community, he gave them the liberty of the island, with the hope that their own sense of honour would always keep them from making him repent his confidence.

Living apart from any other class on the island, their houses formed a little hamlet, in a delightful valley not far from the shore. Here quarters were allotted to Ramsay and his wife; and when the former found himself domiciled with his lares around him, including the faithful spaniel, whom he had brought in his arms, sadly terrified, from the burning wreck of the Spider, he could scarcely credit that he was a prisoner among a class of men by whom, in general, every law and custom of civilised life is subject to open violence and outrage.

The mutineers had all taken advantage of the laws of polygamy propounded by the corporal; and nearly all the officers were married according to the statutes of the land, which merely required the affirmation before witnessess to render it perfectly binding in all its obligations.

Since the first establishment of the colony, a *bonâ fide* chaplain had been added to its members; and the day after Ramsay's landing, this gentleman re-solemnized the marriage of our hero with Angela.

Nothing in this place struck them with more surprise

than the respectable rank of life, accomplishments, and personal beauty of many of the officers' wives. Sent out from England, France, and Holland, to the colonies, where their arrival was eagerly expected by their families, they had been captured on the road, and a reasonable time having been allowed for their grief, they soon perceived that misfortune had thrust upon them one of her severest trials—that in all probability it was to last for life—and that if they wished to get rid of the importunities of a host of suitors, they had no other alternative than to select the least disagreeable as a husband, at once a lord and a shield.

This irreparable step once taken, their simple lives, and the indulgent kindness of those to whom they were linked, gradually enabled them to bear up against their remembrances, and, in many cases, to enjoy as much happiness as falls to the lot of humanity.

This, then, was the first class on the island; the inferior was composed of the various artisans, who, having been kidnapped on the high seas, were compelled to follow their different callings, for their own support and the benefit of the community. The mutineers themselves formed a distinct caste, and lived in the citadel, whose guns commanded both the hamlet of the officers on sufferance, and the houses of the tradespeople.

The fertility of the island had long since proved perfectly adequate to supply all the wants of this strange colony; and scarcely a luxury was to be named that had not been captured on one occasion or another, during its passage from European to colonial possessions of the European States.

All the laws had been framed by the corporal, submitted to the opinion of the mutineers in grand conclave, and, after such alterations as their fancy demanded, were confirmed, and returned to Mynheer for execution.

The same masterly and worldly-wise spirit pervaded one and all of these institutions; and the more Ramsay studied them, the more utterly surprised did he feel at

their emanating from the quarter to which they owed their origin—the more completely was he at a loss to know where that genius for sway had first learned to develope itself.

Every baneful tendency of the multitude seemed made so completely to play—the one upon the other—as to produce such a perfect balance of the whole, that scarcely the vilest passion in the human heart but was made to serve some purpose conducing to the general good.

An instance on a trivial scale will exemplify this fact. Amidst such a set of lawless men offences would clearly make numerous punishments necessary, and yet extremely difficult to be carried into execution.

Taking advantage of that base disposition which all mankind possess, to tyrannise over each other, the corporal had allotted as the most frequent of punishments, that of a cobbing at the hands of more or less of the community, as the case might be. Thus, instead of an offender ever escaping from the weakness of the executive, every man was on the look-out against his neighbour; and, like a chase or hunt, the punishment of an individual transgressor gave amusement to the community, and flattered them with the substance of power, whereas they only possessed the vilest of its shadows.

In point of beauty, nothing could exceed the great variety of rich and lovely scenery in all directions, varying indeed very little in its features from that of Lonelee; and when no danger threatened, and the prospects of the mutineers had seemed bright and unclouded, shooting, fishing, and hunting gave all the pleasures to the male part of the population, which the softer sex found in a rising family, or the charms of music: for harpsichords, pianos, harps, flutes, and fiddles, had all been variously found among the Flying Dutchman's captures.

But Ramsay's chief delight was his restoration to the society of his old and valued friend the surgeon, who, having survived the memorable fight with the Alcibiades,

had steadfastly refused every solicitation to join the mutineers. He was married to a beautiful girl, who had imagined herself on her passage out to join her father, a colonel in the English army, living in one of the West India islands. Perfectly happy in his choice, Dolichus expressed himself supremely indifferent whether he ever left the island or not, till the rising tears in his wife's eyes made him qualify his marvellous resignation with a sequent—"Except that."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

Woe wait the tongue that gives to slander's gale
Falsehood's frail bark, 'neath truth's unsullied sail.

Some days having passed since the arrival of the Flying Dutchman at anchorage, and the blockade being steadfastly maintained, Mynheer began to consider what was likely to be the result. If human art or ingenuity could in any way compass the capture of the island, he knew his countrymen too well to doubt it would be done; and, with all his daring, he foresaw that sooner or later the resistless force and resources of a great kingdom's navy must prevail against his small number of men, however desperate in their courage, or guarded in their fortifications.

The story also of the singular appearance they had met at sea was making a deep impression on that relay of the mutineers who, having been left at home, had not even seen it. Abject superstitious fear seemed to be usurping the place of reason.

The prisoners whom they had recently captured, and who, when no punishment seemed at hand, entered willingly enough into the ranks of the rebels, were now suddenly touched with a late remorse and misgiving, as to whether they had acted altogether rightly, whether they had not been taken in by false descriptions of future joys, and whether, if they were to rise on their captors

and brother desperadoes, the British government ought not to forgive them their backslidings.

When Mynheer, with scorn and anger which he could ill conceal, watched these deep workings of the human heart, he saw how much was effected by the prestige of a name; what is the real value of our fellow creatures' sense of public honour; and how invariably mutiny and rebellion tend to the ultimate destruction of the rebelling party, and the restoration of the power attempted to be thrown off.

Still there was the lion in his heart. He would die at bay—"at least, with harness on his back,"—while a crowd of less mighty spirits slain by his hand, and hovering round, should accompany his grim shade to Hades.

Prepared as he was, however, for a violent and bloody end, it was no part of his creed not to postpone this to the utmost, and, if possible, to evade it altogether. Yet, after racking his imagination through many a restless night, he could devise no mode of driving off the blockaders save one; and as long as the island continued to be invested by the British, he saw no possibility of quenching fear in the breasts of those whose minds were so much less impenetrable than his own—no surety, that at any moment insurrection might not burst forth, and himself and fellow leaders be given to the yard-arm.

His last resource was to try the effect of superstitious fear on the enemy. It is true, his mind misgave him that it would be in vain; still it was but the trial, and he only regretted that he had not been allowed to make it at his entry.

Great was the resistance offered to this plan; but at last, by the combined force of reproaches, promised promotion, and rewards, and the strenuous exertion of all the authority he still possessed, he contrived to muster a crew from those who had been left at the last sailing to guard the island.

Taking advantage of a gale which had for a few hours

blown the blockading squadron off the island, Mynheer bore away to execute his purpose, cheering those he left behind him with the assurance, that even if all failed, he would, despite of a thousand blockading ships, make good his entrance at returning, and then, at the worst, they could leave behind them their prisoners; and carrying off their wives and children, give the enemy a second and similar slip, and sail to find some fresh place of refuge and stronghold.

When Mynheer said this, he thought, and with great reason, that he had given to those left behind an additional hope for the future, and stimulus to do their best. But never was sentence uttered that might not be perverted. The Flying Dutchman had scarcely cleared the coral reefs, when the disaffected of his men on shore gave out that it was his intention never to return to them —that the allusion to some fresher island was a mere blind to deceive them, and rather a revelation of what was passing in his own mind, than a true exposition of his future plans—in short, that he had already sailed to discover this fresh retreat for himself, and commence piracy on a new score, having previously abandoned his old friends, to their fate. The degree of probability in this tale gave it rapid circulation, and inclined many to become believers. The confusion thus produced might baffle any mere spectator to conceive.

The houses of the mutineers, which were built nearly on the crest of their citadel, surrounded, as we have already described, the public square, and here the wives of those men who had just sailed, and whose ship was still in sight, congregated together, bewailing and lamenting their cruel fate, filling the air with cries and imprecations, and insisting that the Flying Dutchman should be recalled.

At any other moment the ridiculous nature of this vain command would only have raised a laugh; now it was scarcely heeded amid the more portentous storming of those who considered themselves betrayed.

Mustapha, Cresswell, and Herbert, were all left behind in command. After vainly endeavouring to persuade their credulous and infuriated comrades that such a step was unlike the fearless character of their leader, they summoned a general council to investigate into the truth of the report.

By thus turning the public wrath and attention into a legitimate channel, they were enabled to maintain rule, which, without some such step, might have been in a few minutes wrested from them, even if nothing worse befel.

After much stormy discussion and incessant recrimination, the report was traced to three men, who, not suspecting what was in store for them, confessed to having had no better foundation for raising it than mere belief and suspicion.

But these were fatal grounds for them. The punishment was put to the general verdict. The furious and agitated minds of the mutineers seemed to find an outlet in this opportunity for vengeance. Death was the sentence given by acclamation. The delegates, convinced of the necessity of some severe example to prop their tottering power, declined any interference on the side of mercy; and in half an hour the ill-fated trio, pierced by fifty balls, lay two feet deep beneath the sands of the sea-shore.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

> Break, break thy wand, magician!—for thy spells
> Are idle now as whisperings of the wind!

Rumour is fabled with a hundred tongues. It was not therefore by the extirpation of three that her never-failing sources of scandal could be dried up. Though fearful justice had been done on the disturbers of the public mind, the surmise to which they had given birth was not to be buried in their unhappy grave. Like an

ill-laid ghost, it rose at midnight to walk again, though with more stealthy step and whispering accent. The idea once raised, fear and suspicion, the constant concomitants of crime, prevented its being finally banished.

By the time of sunset, the blockading squadron had again worked its way up to windward, and invested the island once more; so that when daylight broke, and discovered them increased in number, and the Flying Dutchman still absent, the suspicion of the mutineers began to grow deeper, and continued to do so throughout the day; for as their ringleader had mentioned his intention of trying the effect of supernatural terrors on his enemies soon after midnight, or in the first blush of morning, the non-fulfilment of this design was attributed rather to deliberate treachery than the result of any unforeseen accident.

But though this belief had become very general, it was not, as I have before hinted, expressed, but rather understood amongst them; and, with the exception of Ramsay, few indeed were free from some taint of the impression.

Our hero, on the contrary, believed that if it had been to certain death, the fearless ringleader would have rendered himself in strict redemption of his word. Which was the most correct opinion of that singular man, the issue will decide.

The state of uncertainty, doubt, and alarm, thus produced in the bosoms of the pirates, varied with strong but tantalising hope among their prisoners, rendered, the second night after Mynheer's departure, little favourable to repose on either side.

Poor Ramsay had his share in all these emotions. Gratitude made him feel deeply for the misguided men; and that he should wish to return to his country was of course most natural; while at this too he shuddered, on remembering the charge which had ended in his arrest. On that night, also, Annette, who, with the greatest joy, had returned to the service of her mistress,

brought him the pleasing intelligence that he was the father of two boys, only one of which, however, survived.

The night had waned past midnight, and Ramsay was hailing with delight the cheerful countenance of his old friend the surgeon, who, with a few professional jokes, was assuring him of no evil being likely to befall the mother, when suddenly the mirth of both was hushed by the roar of artillery, and the quick rattling peals of musketry.

In an instant Ramsay darted to the door; but the surgeon intervening said, in his quaint authoritative manner,

"Sit down, man; it's no business of yours whose throats are slitting; you know that wherever shots are flying they always make it their business to take off intermeddlers."

"But, my dear fellow, something has happened which concerns the whole of us, depend upon it; do let me go and see."

"And get knocked on the head for your pains. No, no, if it concerns you, you'll hear of it sooner or later, so pass you out no more till morning dawns. Your wife will be sending for you presently when she hears this firing, and then of course every one will haste to tell her you're in the thick of it; and when my patient's ost, though you have done the mischief, I shall get all the blame."

This argument was conclusive; and though tormented by a thousand vague and agitated surmises, he followed the friendly advice of the surgeon, and remained within.

The true state of affairs was this:—On the second night after the departure of the Flying Dutchman, one of the captured officers had succeeded, by promises of pardon and reward, in persuading a party to betray the rest of their comrades. They assisted him to escape through the passage of the reefs to sea to join the blockaders, and promised their aid on his return with a force in the king's name.

Faithful to their double guilt this aid they rendered but too well for their late and unhappy brother outlaws.

The plan of operations having been previously determined on, the boats of the squadron were speedily manned, and towed by the ships themselves as near to the land as was consistent with their safety, the boats, piloted by the informer, passed through the reefs, landed, and took possession of the fort, held by their coadjutors.

Manning the guns with a party of sturdy seamen, commanded by a lieutenant, the rest of the invaders, officered by three captains, and a proportionate number of juniors, and amounting in number to nearly three hundred men, were led round by the traitors to that side of the mutineers' citadel which was furthest from the sea.

Proceeding in their escalade with all possible silence, they had nearly reached the public square before their approach was known. When at length the alarm was given, so securely had the mutineers been plunged in sleep, that, disbelieving in the possibility of any such surprise, they rushed unheedingly into the open parade, unarmed, even unclothed, and were cut down in scores like beasts at the shambles, while the first musket fired from the height which witnessed their sudden slaughter, was a signal to the squadron at sea to open a heavy fire.

It is true that, from the great distance, this last did little or no damage, but in the dim haze of returning day its exact execution was not to be ascertained, while its powers were increased in terrifying and confusing the assailed, and magnifying the strength of their enemies.

Yet, under all these heavy disadvantages, the pirates, in their terrific efforts to retrieve their fortune, extorted admiration even from their slayers. Defenceless as they started from their beds, they boldly dashed on the bayonets or cutlasses of their assailants, and

endeavoured to wring from the hands of their adversaries the weapons with which they were attacked, or, in the strong convulsive strength of despair, grappled them in their brawny arms, and tried to stifle the foes by whom they had been undone, or using the arms which nature gave them, fixed their dying teeth in the throats of the loyalists.

But it was all in vain. Though none sought to flee, yet all who were unable to obtain arms were speedily hacked and hewed in pieces; while the more fortunate few who had possessed themselves of the means of defence were gradually driven up a steep and almost inaccessible rising of the rock, that abutted upon one side of the grand square, and terminated in a large winding cave, used, since the first landing of the mutineers, as a grand magazine for stores of all descriptions.

This cavern, from the narrow and tortuous nature of its walls, might easily have been defended by a small number from any force without. The king's troops, therefore, were not allowed to press on into needless destruction. But the Judas of the night was at hand to explain and advise, having informed them that the cavern had no other outlet, orders were given to draw up two hundred of the sailors and marines in a semicircle before its mouth. This being done, four or five of the wooden houses of the mutineers were hastily pulled down on the square below, the materials brought up, piled in a large heap, and fired.

Placed directly before the entrance in such a position that the wind blew the whole of the wood-smoke into the dreary recesses of the cavern, the stifling and excruciating vapour induced the unhappy seamen to rush out in parties of three or four, in proportion to their powers of endurance; preferring the speedy decision that awaited the act outside, to perishing like a nest of wasps within.

As the vast and roaring pile of flame shot up the

cliff, and was at moments driven by the blast with overarching and forky points into the dark hollows of the cave, through the high vault of which incessantly rolled black dense volumes of the most suffocating fumes, a group of human figures would be seen every few seconds to rush out in bright relief, amid the glare that shamed back the advancing sun.

Quick and deadly rattled forth the ringing volleys of musketry aimed at their unprotected persons. Many fell dead or mortally wounded; one or two, less fortunate, and so slightly maimed as still to possess the power of motion, sprang forward a few steps. Again and again volley after volley sent its sharp, clear echoes on the elastic air, and the poor wretch, tottering and striving to the last, fell, still alive, upon the embers of the unpitying fire, whose destructive breath was renewed with fresh materials, until the cavern had long since ceased to send forth its despairing refugees, and those who lay mangled on the ground very nearly numbered the exact amount of the transgressors.

Still this funereal pyre sent forth its towering radiance, undimmed even by the early glimmering of day, that began to send up its pale heralds in the east.

The squadron had long ceased firing, and the loyalists, seeing that the victory was theirs, had a moment's time to turn their eyes upon the sea.

—What vast, dim, misty spread of sail was that rapidly bearing down upon the island with an unsubstantial grandeur? The hearts of the seamen grew chill within them; but to the officers afloat and ashore it was the realisation of a thrice-hackneyed tale.

Instead of the irresistible panic which Mynheer had always hitherto been accustomed to produce by the unreal and mysterious appearance of his ship, he beheld with the utmost surprise, the weathermost frigates of the British squadron put about their heads, and, crowding all sail, advance to meet him.

The pyramid of fire and flame blazing away from

that beacon height which he had always hitherto been most careful to render as little noticeable from the sea as possible—the crowds of armed soldiers glittering in scarlet and steel, on which an ominous radiance was thrown—all combined to tell him, with the rapidity less like judgment than revelation, that his fears were too prophetic—that all was indeed over.

The particulars of the plot, the means of the traitors, he knew not—perhaps he never now should know; he perceived at a glance that his secret was too well known—that no supernatural terrors remained to wrap in horror the ridicule of deceit, or unnerve the strength that he was powerless otherwise to resist—that Dutchman's Isle was already irrecoverably lost, and that to proceed farther in any attempt to rescue it, would be to involve himself and those with him in unavoidable destruction.

Giving a heavy sigh to the memory of those who were still dear to him, he showed no further weakness, made no hesitation; but putting up his helm, and rapidly setting his actual sails, he bore away from the spot on which he had left everything that he could still love on earth, followed in all the rage of disappointment, and all the wrath of hot pursuit, by two frigates and a seventy-four.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

The streamlet lingers still to kiss the shore,
And breathe the fragrant zephyrs blowing o'er;
And thus enamoured of the land it laves,
The crystal tear-drops gem its tiny waves.

As a rapid stream that has lightly wandered through many lands—now deviating in its onward course from shore to shore—now undermining this little promontory, or involving that bank in ruin; swollen by many a simple rivulet, augmented by many a tiny tributary—growing calmer and wider on its surface as the deeper

ing waters in its bosom pause to precipitate themselves over some final fall—so our humble tale approaches its catastrophe, and draws to a conclusion.

Truly had the surgeon assured Ramsay that if the roaring of the artillery involved any matter concerning him, he would speedily be informed of it. Care having been taken to secure the few prisoners who had not been involved in the wholesale destruction of the past, among these, severely wounded, was poor Mustapha, now decidedly in still greater jeopardy than his favourite Scheherazade. The victors also had now time to turn their attention to the lately imprisoned and now emancipated officers. No sooner did they amongst these distinguish Ramsay, than he was once more arrested on a duplicate of the same order as that by whose authority he had been taken from Lonelee.

With a degree of ill fortune that seemed to deepen at every step, he had now also to lament having fallen into hands far less lenient than those of the Spider's commander. On once more protesting against this aggression on his liberty, and declaring his utter unconsciousness of having given any cause for such treatment, he was interrupted by the lieutenant, who ordered him into the custody of two marines, and told him, with a sneer, he had better attempt to convince the commodore of his innocence.

"Who is your commodore, sir, and what's his name?" angrily demanded Ramsay, even his forbearance becoming unequal to the task of bearing in utter silence the burthens heaped upon him.

"My commodore's name is Sir Joseph Browne; do you know anything of him?" maliciously added the lieutenant, as he perceived our hero change colour. But the latter was not to be cross-questioned by every idle Jack in office who happened to run against him. Taking no notice of the query, he demanded,

"Is Sir Joseph Browne on shore?"

"Here he comes himself," was the reply, as a bluff,

red, beetle-browed animal came puffing up the ascent on which they all stood.

"We find among the prisoners of the mutineers, Sir Joseph, the party named in the general Admiralty order for apprehension on that charge which——"

"Ay, ay, do you? do you? I hope you have him fast. I wouldn't change his head for a thousand pounds of gold. Where is the scoundrel?"

"There he stands before us, sir."

"Ha! you murderous dog, so we have you, have we?" cried the commodore, striding up to Ramsay, and shaking his fist in his face; while the latter, speechless from the torrent of indignation boiling and burning within him, measured the weak worm from head to foot, and was scarcely able to restrain himself from levelling the overblown porpoise with the dust.

"If you mean those terms for me, sir," Ramsay replied, as soon as he had sufficiently mastered his passions to find utterance, "I hurl them back with every defiance in your teeth. I do not belong to your service, nor will I permit any wretched grovelling creature to take advantage with impunity of a little brief authority, for the purpose of insulting one temporarily placed in his power. Tell me, sir, on what charge you dare to arrest me?"

The commodore's hand flew to his sword, but the consciousness that he dared not use it seemed to enrage him past control. Grinding his teeth, and glaring with impotent malice on his prisoner, he replied—

"For the murder of my relative, Captain Livingstone!"

Every eye was fixed on Ramsay's countenance as this dreadful charge was preferred against him. The flush on his cheek came and went alternately for a few minutes, as he gazed upon the ground; then looking up with a smile of derision, he replied, "If that be all, I am safe, I believe."

"On board with him instantly," cried the commodore; "place him in irons, and let no soul in the ship have a

word to say to him except in the presence of the sentry, who, if the prisoner escape, shall answer for it with his life."

In vain Ramsay stormed, remonstated, entreated; in vain he pleaded the delicate health and situation of his wife; the very name seemed to call forth fresh anger, redoubled ten thousandfold, when Ramsay, hoping to make his persecutor relent, informed him that the lady in question was his own connection and Captain Livingstone's child. Deriding their marriage, insulting the hapless and helpless husband, and uttering a thousand imprecations on the innocent mother and her child, he caused the maddened and struggling father to be carried on board by main force, and then marched forward to execute the same piece of diabolical tyranny on his wife, urging as an excuse that she was "his own relation."

Relation, however, as he was, and irresistible as he considered his authority he found one upon the threshold of his niece's dwelling who forbade his entrance, with far cooler and more unyielding determination than he could show, even with all his rage. This was the surgeon, who declared such a removal would be as wilful an attempt at murder, as if his sword were levelled at her throat. Even this declaration failed of the desired effect, till her firm defender declared, that if the outrage were persisted in, his evidence would be given of every particular, and he solemnly warned the commodore, that he must take on himself all the responsibility of her death. This at last startled even authority, and Browne's officers and junior captains, gathering round him, ventured by their looks to implore his forbearance. The surgeon then tried very hard, on the same ground, that Ramsay should be set at liberty.

On this point the commodore, however, remained inflexible, leaving the surgeon to break the intelligence of his arrest in the best way he could, and adding, that he must do his duty in arresting the criminal pointed out in the Admiralty order; and if Angela died, it would

be so much trouble saved in taking home a squalling woman; and as for the child, that, he thought, had better be left behind at any rate.

Still it was to be hoped that this unnecessary cruelty might in a great degree be owing to sudden rage, which, moderating on the passage, would remit some of its odious inflictions. Vain hope! the tortured husband and father, throughout the whole of that long voyage, was never allowed to set eyes on the form of either wife or child.

Atrocities such as these seem to be owing to the heated fancy rather that cold revolting facts. What then must we think of that relation who could, day after day, week by week, and month succeeding month, employ his whole energies and authority in painting the crime of the husband to the wife, with a view of poisoning the heart of the latter against one to whom Heaven and the immutable laws of nature had linked her by the dearest of all possible ties!

When Angela was first told by the commodore (for no other lips could be found to bear the hateful intelligence) that Ramsay was arrested on suspicion of murdering her father, that stroke of horror seemed to have filled up her cup of misery to the last fatal overflowing, and, fainting away she lay to all appearance like one whose spirit sleeps for the last time.

When at length sufficiently recovered to comprehend the case in all its bearings, her first question was, "Does he deny the deed?"

The officer to whom this simple question was put, marked the cold, fixed gaze of deep-set agitation that pervaded the countenance of the querist; and when he quickly replied, that the criminal did rebut the charge *in toto*, weak and exhausted as she was, she threw herself on her knees, and with streaming eyes poured forth her incoherent thanks to Heaven. Then turning to her uncle with a beam of triumph on those lovely, but, alas! care-worn features, and rising with the urgency, of the

occasion beyond her usual energy, she replied, 'Now, sir, your trouble is at an end; let me hear no more entreaties to forsake one who is dearer to me than the whole world beside. While the faintest assertion of his innocence—the barest denial of this horrid charge is made by my husband—no power on earth—no, not even the witness of the grave itself—shall ever lead me for an instant to doubt the father of my child—the preserver of my own life a thousand times over. Every thought, every feeling within him is truth itself; and the faintest utterance of his innocence is proof to me more strong than a legion of commodores with oaths upon their lips. God has united us, not only in body, but in mind. Tyrant as you are, you may indeed separate us in the former, but, blessed be God the latter is beyond your power. The heart of woman is a thing too bright, too pure, for such as you to comprehend; but, weak as we are, you shall find that the Almighty made us—that he has given us a strength no ills can crush; and the lower my husband's fortunes sink, the more constant, the more devoted, shall be mine."

Overcome by this sudden excitement and agitation of her mind, and the effort made to express her firm resolves, she again relapsed into insensibility, while the commodore, venting a thousand curses on that seemingly frail and gentle being, could scarcely even then believe how completely her noble spirit had baffled all his art —all his authority.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

By the deep star! 'tis sweet to wander o'er
Danmonia's ruby sparkling sands and shore;
Ere yet her light the crescent Cynthia yields,
While sea and sky unrol their purple fields,
And the waves fall harmoniously near,
Mirth to the eye and music to the ear;
And sighs the night-breeze sweeping o'er the sea,
Rich with the perfumed tribute of the lea.
Their fragrance there the flow'ring bean-fields give;
There many a tender myrtle loves to live;
There roses spring uncultur'd to the hand,
And honeysuckles blossom o'er the land;
The blushing clover flings its sweetness round
And spreads its purple mantle on the ground;
While fair clematis wreathes her hair with flow'rs,
And forms of beauty dwell in fairy bowers;
O'er each low roof the jasmine clambers free,
And pays the music of the honey bee.

Light and joyous as the first breath of a July morning were the hearts of the officers and crew on board H. M. ship Trojan, as that seventy-four cast anchor in Plymouth Sound. In the height of a brilliant summer she had arrived in the Channel, and a few hours after sunset her men beheld the marked and beautiful shores of Devon glowing in the bright moonlight, and surrounding her nearly on all sides.

At the time of which we write, the bay was yet unprotected by that monument to our national skill and perseverance, the Breakwater, and the heavy swell that at times rushed through the Sound bore striking, and often too fatal evidence, that the force of the Atlantic could penetrate even thus far up the English Channel.

Anchored, however, under Staddon Heights, which in some measure sheltered the ship from the south-east breeze, the yards were no sooner squared, the salute fired, and the side piped to the commodore, who immediately departed for the shore in his gig, than the officers began to make up parties for the same indulgence,

while the middies looked on with wistful but not envious eyes.

They knew that their turn must soon arrive, and overjoyed at its proximity, and hoping that the ship might not be ordered on to Portsmouth, the departure of their more privileged superiors now only the more vividly drew to their view the joys in store for themselves upon the morrow; while frolic and amusements of every kind—not a little rough in their way it is true—filled up their time, and bespoke the exuberance of their delight.

Nor were the seamen less elated at once more viewing the well-remembered pleasures of Plymouth Dock. The rude delights of paying off, and the outrageous joys of squandering in three days the large sums of money so laboriously earned by three years' danger and toil—the marrying of new wives, or the meeting with old ones, whichever happened to come first, all gradually approached, and the chance of "a spell ashore" acted indeed like a spell on them, as the ship's fiddler, under special permission, excited their active limbs to redoubled efforts, by the appropriate air of "When I do return again, how happy shall I be!"

A joy, the more intense from its long suppression, seemed to irradiate the hearts of all on board. But to this there were two sad and marked exceptions;—the prisoner, who remained heavily ironed, and severed from all friendly communication on the main deck, and the still beautiful but anguish-stricken wife and mother, who, not far distant, could almost hear his sighs, and who clasped to her wasted bosom the infant that a few days might render an orphan.

Much as she had entreated to be allowed an interview with her husband during the voyage home, this poor consolation was barbarously denied her. Once or twice at first, it is true, she was permitted, beyond speaking distance, to behold his degradation, in hope that this might shame her into renouncing him.

But the contrary effect was produced; to the great surprise of the commodore, they beheld a result the very opposite to that which they anticipated; and then even that questionable indulgence ceased; while, though her suspense might be the greater, she was at any rate spared the pang of witne sing a persecution that no influence of hers could mitigate.

Day by day, and subsequently at longer intervals, the commodore insisted on intruding his odious visits upon Angela, to ascertain her sentiments—to entrap her, if possible, into some crimination of her husband's conduct, and, failing this, to load her with obloquy and reproach, and ridicule the idea of her marriage.

Unfitted by nature and disposition to bear this cruel persecution, she evaded as much as possible the visits of this unnatural relation, and gradually sank under her sufferings, to a degree that threatened a speedy release by death, if no more kindly termination to her sorrows should arrive.

But though the frame gave way, the mind remained true as ever to its duties. Not the slighest hint of doubting her husband's truth and honour ever passed her lips; though, when left wholly to herself, and in the deep watches of the night, when sorrow rendered sleep impossible, she dwelt anxiously, and with many tears, upon the charge brought forward against him.

Could it be possible that the head which had planned and witnessed the murder of the father could have slept so tranquilly upon the bosom of the daughter?—that hands, fresh from the deadly and assassin-like struggle with the parent, should take in marriage those of the child?—that the mild, the gentle, the high spirited Ramsay, should on any provocation have become the midnight murderer?—Most unnatural—impossible! Still the horrid thought would assail, would recur to her, adding, if that were possible, to the woes that already afflicted her.

As the time approached that was to render certain the

fate in store for her, the excitement deepened into that state of dread which almost annihilates the exercise of reason.

With every entreaty she could use, she prayed to be allowed one brief interview with her husband, to arrange with him the steps necessary for his defence, and the writing to his friends. This was denied.

The court-martial was fixed within a few days after the ship's arrival, and scarcely time was left for application to his friends in Scotland, for that aid and countenance he so much required.

Great as had been the slaughter among the crew of the FLYING DUTCHMAN, it had, unfortunately for Ramsay, fallen short of one of the greatest villains amongst the whole of the pirates. The name of this wretch was Pierson, and he, in common with every one on board, had no sooner heard the crime with which his late superior was charged, than, on condition of receiving pardon, he offered to turn king's evidence, and bring forward such testimony as must convict the prisoner.

The joy of the commodore on hearing this intelligence exceeded all bounds of decency. The man was immediately brought before himself and the first lieutenant, and his conditions being granted—for he was too cunning to utter a word till that important point was effected in his favour—his deposition was carefully taken down by the clerk, for fear of any accident happening to him on the way home, and himself placed under the charge of a sentry on the same deck with Ramsay. Being well treated, he was thus guarded from the otherwise dangerous scorn and wrath of the seamen, who, however they might view the act with which Ramsay was charged, still clearly considered the baseness of this miscreant as far exceeding it.

What the evidence was that this person had tendered, and the commodore had so readily accepted, did not transpire; but thus much the clerk who took it down

was permitted to assert, that no doubt now remained, either as to Ramsay's guilt or punishment.

Still the prisoner, as firmly as ever, maintained his entire innocence—still he racked his mind in vain to discover what could be the testimony which Pierson, above all others, could bring forward against him; and, though with dark forebodings as to the result of the trial, he looked forward with hope to the arrival of those friends for whom he had written; and, as in every other calamity which had of late fallen so rapidly and severely upon him, he presented an unsinking heart and unbroken courage to meet all.

CHAPTER LXXX.

There's not a day whose opening beauty wakes
The soul to rapture, but ere evening breaks
Some heart, by poverty or grief laid low!

THE morning of the trial had arrived, and calm beneath the fearful scrutiny and colder looks of all around, Ramsay, under guard of the provost-marshal, entered the crowded court.

Who has ever passed the threshold of a criminal court, either as prosecutor or prisoner, witness or spectator—I might almost add as judge or counsel—without feeling his heart sink within him?

I know not whether this sickly sensation of dread is most powerfully produced by the forms of civil or martial law—whether the black robes or the glittering uniforms, the solemn jury, or the drawn sword of the judge-advocate, produce the deepest emotions. But I incline to think the former. The sombre hue, the staid demeanour, the greater absence of parade, and that natural tendency in the imagination to attribute the greater power where the less is shown, all combine to strike the mind with a degree of awe, which is not equalled by the dazzling appearance of the powerful

nine who, decked in gold and blue, are almost omnipotent to save or condemn.

For the first time for many years the prisoner wore no trace of his profession: as an officer he could not appear—as a seaman he would not appear; but, dressed in a quiet suit of black, he took his station by the side of the marshal, and made his bow to the court. An hour had scarcely elapsed since, with all the speed which money could procure, an elderly gentleman, accompanied by two counsel, skilled in naval courts-martial, had arrived in Dock, and come off to see the prisoner. The senior of these was his father; and having taken such precautions in his behalf as the time allowed, they now prepared to watch the proceedings of the day with feelings, those of the father more especially, which no words can hope to render.

The necessary forms fulfilled, the charge was read. At the first moment it struck Ramsay with some surprise; but, obliged to give his attention to every point as it followed that which went before, no reflection was allowed him on that part which struck him as so singular.

He had partly expected, also, that his enemies would have involved him in the charge of mutiny, and thus, by a series of accusations, have divided, weakened and overpowered his abilities to defend himself. In this he was wrong. They had confined themselves simply to this one point, namely, of his having deliberately violated the Articles of War, by setting upon the person of Captain Livingstone, arresting life by the process of strangulation, and finally, throwing his body overboard,—the penalty of which crimes, as everybody knew, was death beyond reprieve.

While this dreadful charge was making against his only son, the father covered his face to conceal the involuntary grief that agitated him. A deep silence reigned for a few seconds throughout the court, broken only by the occasional striking of some of the heavy

sword-hilts one againstan other, as their owners whispered together at the long table round which they sat.

Every eye was turned upon the pale but composed features of the prisoner. These, though sunk from long and severe confinement, showed little trace of the secret cunning and implacable revenge of the midnight assassin.

The first witness was called, and the wretch to whom we have alluded made his appearance. The oath having been duly tendered, the judge advocate proceeded to take his testimony.

"What is your name?"

"James Pierson."

"What is your calling?"

"A seaman's."

"To what ship did you last belong?"

An involuntary feeling of shame here seemed to steal over the witness's countenance, as he hung down his head and muttered in reply, "The Flying Dutchman."

"Were you in that ship under any other name?"

"Yes."

"Did she wear the king's pendant then?"

"She did."

"How came she to be called the Flying Dutchman?"

"The men mutinied, and took that name to cruise under."

"Before the men mutinied, who was her captain?"

"Captain Livingstone."

"What became of him?"

"Nobody could rightly tell at the time, sir. He disappeared from on board one night, and next morning we found his cabin with the door locked, and nobody inside; and then the crew rose and took the ship from the officers."

"How long had you been on board the frigate in question at the time Captain Livingstone was missed?"

"Nigh upon a year, sir,"

"Did any circumstance come to your knowledge

that enabled you in any way to account for the captain's absence?"

"Yes, sir."

"State to the court what those circumstances were."

"The night before the captain was missed from his cabin, I was going on the foremast sail-bin, just abaft the fore magazine, when Mr. Ramsay, who is now a prisoner here, and Corporal Macpherson, the corporal of marines, came and set themselves close down before me, and began to speak in a low sort of tone; part of what they said I could at times hear very plainly, though part I could not."

"Did the corporal or the prisoner know that you were within hearing?"

"No, sir, I was hidden from their sight by several of the seamen's bags; besides, the hammocks had been piped down and hung up, but few of them were unlashed, though the lights on the lower deck had been put out."

"Then the corporal and the prisoner spoke, you believe, without any knowledge of being overheard?"

"Yes, sir."

"And what parts of their conversation did you catch?"

"Why, sir, as soon as Mr. Ramsay had seated himself upon some bags which were piled upon the hatch of the fore magazine, he gave the corporal a packet or parcel, and some conversation followed, of which I could only make out the word 'Lady,' repeated several times. And something was also said about money, though I could not rightly distinguish what—till, at last, I heard something very like the sound of some gold chinking, and Mr. Ramsay said something to which the corporal replied,—'*You intend something serious?*' Mr. Ramsay then added, '*Things of which true men are loth to speak, lest their conduct fall under the suspicion of bravado.*'"

"To this did the corporal make any reply, witness?"

"Yes, sir, he replied,—'*I feared it was that.*'"

"And then what said the prisoner?"

"Why, sir, he said to the corporal, '*There is a confidence more embarrassing to a true friend than desirable for him.*' After this the corporal muttered something, and among the rest I heard him say, '*I understand, sir, what you mean to do;*' then I lost a sentence, and then I distinctly heard the words, '*the bloodhound.*' Mr. Ramsay here again said something which I lost, and the corporal answered, '*It required but a firm hand and a true heart, and you have both.*' The prisoner then again asked a question, and the corporal in reply to it, said something which I could not hear, and finally the words, *While I call off the attention of the cabin-sentry, enter you the cabin, and never leave it till the scoundrel is as dead as one of his boiled chickens. I'll answer for the crew rising, and then the barky is your own.*' On this advice of the corporal the prisoner made many observations, but the only one I could hear distinctly was, '*To save my life it is necessary to accomplish the death of the captain.*' Some further conversation passed between them, but I became so frightened lest, if they found me listening, they might take my life upon the spot, that I started up, rubbing my eyes as if just awake, and ran upon deck, while the last word I heard from Mr. Ramsay was—'*I consent.*'

As soon as I got upon the maindeck, I had resolved to tell the captain of what I had heard; but when I came to inquire, I found that he had left orders not to be called till the next morning, and, knowing he slept with his door locked, I thought no harm could happen by delaying; but when the morning came, and he was gone I was afraid to say a word about what had happened, for fear the blame should all fall on me; and if I had, when the corporal took possession of the ship he'd have thought as little of tucking me up at the yardarm——"

Here the witness was of course prevented from uttering that which had no pretension to be called evidence but he had already borne too fatal testimony.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

O! for a thousand tongues to curse the slave,
Whose deadly blight
Comes o'er the councils of the brave,
And blasts them in their hour of might.—LALLA ROOKH.

A DEAD and ominous pause followed the delivery of this terrible evidence, and the effect it had produced upon the court against the prisoner was such as a single glance could not fail to perceive. The kind and pitying looks of compassion which had before seemed to share in some degree the pain endured by Ramsay, were now changed to those of cold distrust, or still less equivocal suspicion.

"If the prisoner wishes to ask the witness any questions, Mr. President," said the judge-advocate, "perhaps he will now do so:" and the learned gentleman resumed his seat.

Twice, however, had the president to intimate this to Ramsay before the attention of the latter seemed roused to the exact position in which he stood. Perplexed, amazed, as if discrediting the evidence of his senses, the prisoner's eyes remained fixed on vacancy, with the expression of one who endeavours vainly to recal the past.

"Do you wish to ask the witness any question, prisoner?" said the presiding admiral, a second time.

"Certainly, certainly,—yes, certainly,—by your leave, sir," was the abrupt and hurried reply.

One of the counsel, who had accompanied Ramsay's father from London here approached the side of the prisoner, and, after a whispered conference of a few seconds, resumed his seat.

"I wish the president," said Ramsay, "to ask the witness what was his calling or avocation before he entered the navy?"

The witness seemed to falter at this query, but replied,

"A clerk."

"To whom were you a clerk?"

"To a grocer."

"In what part of the kingdom?"

"At Andover."

"What made you give up your occupation as a grocer's clerk at Andover, to enter the king's navy?"

"I thought it would better my condition."

"Who told you so?"

Here considerable hesitation was evinced, but the reply being enforced was, "The magistrates."

"What, the magistrates at Andover?"

"No."

"What magistrates, then?"

"The magistrates at Winchester."

"At Winchester!—indeed! Were you pressed?"

"No."

"Did you volunteer, then?"

"No,"

"Neither pressed nor volunteered. How did you enter the navy, then?"

"I was sent."

"Where from?"

"Winchester gaol."

"From Winchester gaol!—Pray may I ask what action procured you a retreat in that asylum?"

"A little accident, sir, in the cash line," answered the prisoner, with the utmost effrontery; thus needlessly replying to a question that could not have been maintained. "I happened to borrow a small sum of money of my master, and because I forgot to tell him of it till after he had found it out, he turned very spiteful."

"Thank you, that's all I wish to know about that matter. Now will you inform me why, why you knew, according to your account, that the corporal and myself had plotted Captain Livingstone's death, you were among the first to come forward with the crew of the frigate, and help to take her from the officers, and to put her

under the corporal's orders? and why also, when I was captured by the Flying Dutchman, were you among the first to solicit my taking the command of her out of the corporal's hands?"

During these questions the witness hung down his head; but as soon as Ramsay had finished speaking, he replied, without looking up,—

"In course I did these things—it was very natural I should; how could I dare to do otherwise? You and the corporal must both have know'd that I overheard your plotting, or rather, you must have suspected it; and if either of you could have traced it out for certain, I knew my glass would run pretty short; so I made myself foremost in your party, as it may be, to throw dust in your eyes; 'twas my only chance."

"You seem, sir, to have a very straightforward way of proceeding; and, perhaps, you can give an equally good explanation of the manner in which you have managed to keep in your head the whole particulars of a conversation which you allege to have heard at such a distance of time since?"

"O certainly, sir, I can explain that too," replied Pierson, in the same pert, unabashed style as that which he had used hitherto. "When I heard what villany you and the corporal were hatching, I determined, as I said before, to let the captain know it. However, as I found he was gone to bed, and I knew this was a ticklish sort of matter, more especially with two men's words against one, I thought I'd first write it down, to be sure that nore of it might be forgotten before morning; so I went aft and wrote it down at once, word for word, by the light at the cabin-door, and I borrowed the pencil of the sentry to do so, as I dare say he can tell their honours, for he's standing here in court. Next day, when I could get a little drop of ink from the purser's steward, I wrote it out fair, and here's the paper."

As the witness said this, he laid his hat down on the deck, and from an inner pocket of his jacket produced

a dirty, worn-out, memorandum-book. When first picked from the pocket of its original possessor, this appeared to have been of handsome Russia leather; now a few pieces alone of the tough skin remained, patched with coarse ship's canvass, and held together by huge herring-boned stitches. From this precious depository was fished a slip of paper that just held together, while the orderly sergeant handed it to the president, and the latter with some difficulty deciphered nearly verbatim the conversation given in evidence against the prisoner.

Hitherto the prisoner's counsel seemed the only person on whom Pierson's startling evidence had produced no effect. Possibly he hoped, from the kind of character which the wretch had borne previous to entering the navy, that something might be elicited by the prisoner in cross-examination, which would have the effect of destroying what he so stoutly advanced.

As the cross-examination proceeded, it is true, this hope diminished. He then saw how utterly inadequate the best abilities were to such a task, if unversed in that delicate and peculiar art, which it often takes half the lifetime even of an experienced counsel to master.

As far as Ramsay had gone hitherto, he had only been tightening the rope around his own neck, for every one of his latter questions had given the witness the greater opportunity of confirming his own testimony. When, therefore, he heard mention made of the written paper, his spirits rose again, as he thought it hardly possible that any sailor could have kept a scrap of this sort by him so long, when, to all appearance, the chance of requiring it was for ever at an end; and unless the paper could be produced, the prisoner would have had a very fair right to argue on the misrepresentation likely to occur in the recollection, and still more in the repeating, of so long a conversation, part only of which was heard even at the hour of its delivery;—an argument that would have thrown great doubt upon the rest of it.

Now, on the contrary, when he heard the president decipher from Pierson's dirty notes nearly a *verbatim* report of the fatal conversation of the prisoner—when, after the most careful examination of the document, he saw the genuine appearance which it carried, the letters bearing that peculiar traced appearance which always distinguishes penmarks over those of pencil beneath and saw it put upon the record of the court's proceedings, his mind began to waver as to the innocence of his client, and he considered the most friendly step in his power to be, that of advising Ramsay to cross-question the adverse witness no further.

Secure, therefore, of having placed the halter round the neck of his victim, if that were any consolation to him, the seaman left the witness-stand, with the silent execration of many around, to return to the safe custody of his guard.

The next witness called was the marine who had been on sentry at the captain's door at the time when Pierson stated that he had borrowed a pencil from him.

This witness having given in his name and that of his late ship, was asked, "What duty did you discharge on board the frigate you have named?"

"Private in the marines."

"Is it not the duty of the marines to supply sentrie for the door of the captain's cabin?"

"Yes, sir."

"Were you in the frigate on the night when Captain Livingstone disappeared from on board?"

"Yes, sir.

"Who was sentry at the cabin door on that night?"

"There were three, sir; private Milbank had the middle watch, private Brown the morning watch, and I had the first watch, sir."

"Now calling your attention to the fact of a lead pencil being borrowed from you, what do you recollect during that watch?"

"I recollect that Pierson, sir, one of the afterguard,

who was sometimes employed to write in the clerk's cabin, came and borrowed a pencil of me."

"What did he do with it?"

"He began writing down something which I though was a song, or a wager, or something of that sort, on leaf he tore out of an old book of accounts, which he took from his pocket."

"Would you know the leaf if you saw it again?"

"I think I might, sir."

"Is that it?"

The marine received the tattered leaf, and having carefully turned it over once or twice, replied: "The pencil marks I see are gone, sir; still that was as near the size of the book as might be—I should say 'twas the same sir."

The prisoner was now asked if he wished to put any questions, but, with the air of one more stupified than surprised, he absently replied, "None," and the witness was allowed to depart.

When the various arrangements of writing down notes on the preceding testimony had been gone through, a dead silence pervaded the court: for a few seconds not even a whisper was heard; the hurried scratching of some reporter's dilatory pen, left behind in the general race, was the only sound that served to cover the heavy beating of the father's heart, as, wound up to the last pitch of agony, he beheld, thus accumulating, proof upon proof of his son's guilt. Even this faint distraction ceased, and then were distinguished, painfully pre-eminent, the heavy, hollow pulsation of the old man's bosom—each labouring throb seeming as if it were to be his last—his eyes distended and fixed upon Ramsay's averted countenance, while the livid lips involuntary moved, to all appearance scarcely able to refrain from some adjuration to his child to disclose the truth.

Every eye was turned upon him, but he seemed neither to know nor heed it. Whatever they might think of the prisoner, none present could fail to feel for him;

and more than once a tear might have been seen to glisten upon sterner lids than his, whose agony was too intense for such relief. During this ominous pause, which so plainly spoke the sentiments of his judges as to Ramsay's conduct and fate, the president looked round, and seeing everything ready, said in a loud deep voice, "*Let the next witness be produced.*"

"*The next* witness?" whispered the spectators, repeating the word;—"what, is there still further evidence?"

So thought Ramsay: so, alas! thought his father. The orderly of the court advanced to the after cabin, which was behind that where the trial was proceeding, and threw the door wide open. Every voice was hushed —every eye was strained towards the entrance: a heavy step was heard—the sounding of a uniform sword—a tall figure appeared in the doorway, in the full uniform of a post-captain—a man of dark and threatening visage: he strode towards the end of the table, where the officer of the court stood ready to administer the oath and turned his scowling look upon the prisoner. Starting back with surprise and exultation mingled, Ramsay looked towards his father, and exclaimed in tones that rang through the court, "This is CAPTAIN LIVINGSTONE!"

"God be praised—my son, then, is no murderer," responded the old man; and, with this involuntary exclamation, the overstrained power of his mind seemed temporarily to give way, and his head dropped upon the shoulder of his friend who sat next him in utter insensibility.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Relentless wretch!—and if thou swearest false,
Then hell itself were far too good for thee!

Some minutes elapsed before the court proceeded with the trial. The voice of the president ordering silence was promptly and implicitly obeyed. Captain Livingstone's oath was taken, and his testimony began. Having stated his name and rank, and the fact of his having commanded the frigate, the judge-advocate proceeded with the examination in chief.

"Were you on board the——frigate on the night of———?"

"I was.'

"Did any circumstance occur that night to fix it on your memory in particular?"

"Yes."

"Be pleased to state those facts to the court."

"On the night in question I retired to my cabin at eleven o'clock, leaving orders not to be called on any account till eight o'clock on the following morning. It was my custom always to sleep with the door locked, and my arms at hand, as I had received various anonymous threats of personal violence, and knew that there were several bad characters among the crew, capable of anything: the prisoner, perhaps from his better education, the most——"

Here Captain Livingstone's testimony was checked by the prisoner's council, it being contrary to every rule of justice, to enter on assertions of former misconduct which the prisoner could have no opportunity of rebutting.

"Do you recognise the prisoner at the bar, then, as having been one of your crew?"

"I do. He was formerly a lieutenant in the ship, but had been pressed subsequently when we were short of hands. To return, however, to the statement I was making to the court, I retired to my cabin at eleven

6 o'clock: immediately afterwards I undressed, turned into my cot, and having extinguished the cabin lights, soon fell asleep. I had not slept long—for it was barely growing towards morning—when I was awakened by the violence of some tremendous pressure on my throat. Almost strangled, and indeed so completely choked, as to be unable to utter any cry for assistance, I tried, with all the strength and despair of a dying man, for such I conceived myself, to shake off the gripe of my murderer.

"But this I was unable to do. The position in which I lay, and the horrible sense of suffocation which I found every moment growing more desperate, so impared my strength, that I could make no adequate resistance.

"The assassin, too, had fixed his hands so firmly, the fingers being interlaced round the back of my neck, and the large powerful thumbs pressing on the windpipe, that I gave myself up for lost, though I did not cease to struggle, however faintly. The mere satisfaction of assassination, however, did not seem to be sufficient for my assailant; for, seeming to think the pleasures of murder nothing unless combined with the excess of revenge, he dragged me partly from my cot towards the spot where the moonbeams entered the small cabin scuttle, and turned his face upwards in the bright light, so that, dying as I was, I might yet have the mortification of recognising who it was that triumphed over me.

"With this view I suppose, also, he momentarily relaxed the gripe from my throat, and with a last desperate struggle, I contrived to make a faint sort of moan; but instantly I felt the whole force of my murderer's strength renewed upon my throat. A strong glare, like that of lightning, seemed to flash across my eyes, and the last thing I remember hearing was the ship's bell striking in the galley. I remember thinking also how hard it was to perish by a midnight assassin, with help so near at hand. After this a mist quickly

gathered about surrounding objects, still leaving the face of my murderer clear and distinct to the last; and he seemed to be watching with a smile of relentless ferocity and triumph my dying agonies.

"What passed in the cabin or the ship afterwards, I cannot say; everything remained a blank to me until, coming again to my senses, I found myself, in the first dawn of daybreak, floating in the midst of the open sea, my body supported by some substance, partly sunk and partly swimming upon the surface; while round me I saw plying the innumerable fins of a shoal of sharks, who, I suppose, were waiting for the moment to seize their prey. On discovering the imminent danger which threatened me, I lay perfectly still, and began to recall what had passed, and to discover what supported me.

There was very little sea, and the slight swell that did exist bouyed up the gunnels of a huge pinnace containing four or five casks of fluid, some of them no doubt full of spirit, and this accounted for their keeping up the boat, to the bottom of which they seemed lashed. One of these casks was immediately under my head, covered by the boat's sail, which appeared to have fallen on it; so I conclude that I must have been thrown from my cabin overboard, in a state of half-suspended animation, and providentially have fallen upon the barge or pinnace of some wrecked ship, and that the boat having been afterwards swamped, the crew had been washed away.

"After lying in this situation for some hours dreadfully scorched by the sun, I contrived to shift the sail under my head so as to get at the cask beneath. Having gnawed away the wood round one part of the bung, I contrived to lift it, and to my great joy discovered it to be full of rum. Parched and exhausted as I was, I swallowed more of it than I could have imagined possible to be taken by any one person; and replacing the bung, and gathering the sail in a heap, so that my head lay clear of the sea, I spread a handkerchief over my face, and fell fast asleep. It was nearly

evening, when I was awakened by the rushing of water and the shouting of human voices, and looking up I found myself almost under the bows of a brig-of-war. My cries and jestures having attracted their attention, I was taken on board the Boxer, English man-of-war sloop, and subsequently came home, where I have been till called forward for this court-martial."

"You have stated, sir," said the judge-advocate, as the witness paused, that you distinctly recognised in your cabin, the face of your attempting murderer. Would you know that face if you saw it again, Captain Livingstone?"

The captain took time for this reply, and then, with all the solemnity which manner could give to words, replied, "Most undoubtedly I should."

"Have you ever seen that face since, Captain Livingstone?"

"I have sir. Nay more," (turning, as he added these words, towards the broken lieutenant,) "I see it at this very moment. It was the face of Ramsay—the prisoner at the bar!"

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

> How shall I prove my innocence, sweet lords?
> Has heaven not written truth upon my face?
> The only writing that can never lie!

Pale and deeply agitated Ramsay heard this terrific evidence given against him; but whether the strong emotions under which he appeared to labour were those of well-dissembled guilt, or inexpressible surprise, the court seemed at a loss to determine.

Their whole attention absorbed by his demeanour, they appeared to weigh in their own minds the irrefragable proofs against him, with the seeming improbability that a face formed, like Ramsay's, to express all the high and noble qualities of the soul, should yet

be the false index to a heart, capable of revelling in the darkest excesses of revenge.

Once or twice it seemed as if the prisoner was about to speak; but his pallid lips only trembled, and his eyes glanced wildly round the court from one to another until they rested on the speechless, almost senseless, figure of his father. Unable to endure this sight, he drew his emaciated hand across his face, and only removed it when the examination of Captain Livingstone was renewed.

"You have stated, sir," resumed the judge-advocate, "that in the face of the prisoner you recognise the features of the assassin who attempted your life on the night in question?"

"I have, sir."

"Now I hope, in so serious a matter as the present, you have not allowed anything but the most positive and serious consideration to influence your testimony?"

"No, sir; I have not. I have not a stronger conviction of my now standing before this court, than that I saw the prisoner's features in the face of the man who attempted to strangle me, as plainly as I ever saw anything in my life."

"Had you any quarrel with the prisoner?"

"Yes," replied Captain Livingstone, after some little hesitation; "I had threatened him on the preceding evening with severe punishment for his conduct; and he knew that if I lived till the succeeding day, my pledge would have been fulfilled. Indeed, I had already taken steps towards it."

"Very well, then, sir, I have nothing further to ask you."

The President—"The case of the prosecution is closed."

"Prisoner," said the president, "would you wish to put any questions to this witness?"

"Only one, sir," replied the prisoner, summoning, as with a last effort, every dormant energy to meet the

heavy charges that had so overwhelmed him. "You have stated, Captain Livingstone, your belief, that in your attempted murderer you recognised my person. I only assure you solemnly, as the God of heaven lives to hear us both this day, that I not only was not your assailant, nor was I in any way cognisant of the intended attack, or I would have done my utmost to prevent it. Further, I as solemnly declare, I never till this day, from your own lips, heard of the cause or manner of your disappearance on board the frigate; and lastly, I now entreat you fairly, between man and man, as you ever hope to have mercy shown to yourself, to say if you do not think it possible, that aroused suddenly from your sleep, after leaving written orders respecting my punishment, and holding, as you did, the erroneous opinion you had formed of me—do you not think it possible that these impressions and circumstances, combined with the darkness of the cabin, may have led you to mistake your assailant?"

Captain Livingstone paused for several moments, as if in deep consideration; then bending down his head, he replied in a low voice, "I *do not*—I do not think it possible I could have made any such mistake."

Pending this awful pause, the prisoner had stood erect; his eyes lit up by the brightness that formerly never left them; his whole attitude that of intense, overwrought eagerness, and the expression of his countenance denoting the most perfect reliance on the generosity and candour of his foe. Alas! what a sad change came over him on hearing the reply! At first he seemed to doubt its reality; then clasping his strained hands, with mingled bitterness and sustaining dignity of betrayed confidence and conscious integrity, he exclaimed, "To God I commend the innocence I cannot establish—Heaven knows that never man was more innocent of this charge than I."

The tone, the jesture, the look, the sad appeal that

bore with it no trace of bravado, no taint of falsehood seemed instinctively to find a way to the innermost hearts of all present. The tears of his father coursed each other rapidly over his convulsed features, though the proud old man would allow no sob to betray his anguish

The president and the court bent their eyes upon the papers before them. The judge advocate wore a look of mingled doubt and incredulity, and the disappointment of the prisoner's council was apparent. The auditory looked at each other, but neither spoken nor moved.

Not so a tall figure wrapped in a large boat-cloak, who had hitherto been lurking unnoticed between one of the guns and the ship's side. Suddenly starting to his full height, which scarcely permitted him to stand upright between the decks, he dashed away his disguise which had hitherto been wrapped round him, and pressing through the crowd to the end of the table near which Captain Livingstone still stood, struck one of the brass rails with a force that shivered it to atoms.

"Never," he exclaimed in a voice that overbore all opposition—"never yet, by man, was truer word disclosed. I alone, Mr. President, can render you up the real criminal to justice; and if I have your leave to speak, however out of form, I will do so."

Confounded—surprised—taken at a moment's notice, the president seemed unable to decide what, under all the circumstances, was the best course to pursue. Casting his eye, however, on Captain Livingstone, who had recently given such determined evidence against Ramsay, he observed him turn of a deathlike hue, the blood forsaking his lips, and his eyes becoming fixed on the stranger, with that dull fascinated look of horror which the weaker prey is supposed to exhibit before its resistless destroyer. Curiosity and amazement seemed to overcome form; and waving his hand as if ready to hear what should be advanced, the new and gigantic witness fixed his dark eagle eye upon the pallid face of Livingstone.

"Call to your recollection the night of your attempted murder, sir," exclaimed the fierce interrogator in a hollow but sternly imperious tone, which the captain seemed unable to resist. The latter did not, however, endeavour to reply, but simply bowing his head in token of acquiescence, the former resumed.—"Do you not remember, sir, when you were dragged from your cot, that your assailant might discover his person for your recognition in the moonlight—do you not remember that, in the last despairing struggle for life, you contrived to make your teeth nearly meet in the wrist of your adversary?"

The captain trembled excessively as this question was put to him; and with a few seconds' thought, answered in a tone of horror,—"Now that you recal it to my mind I do remember such a fact."

The stranger heard the reply, and, after regarding its deliverer with the utmost scorn, he turned in silence to the president. Holding up to the view of all his powerful right arm, the previously ripped sleeve fell back, disclosing the enormous fascia of muscles, and he pointed to two semicircular scars on the fleshy part of the wrist.

"These, gentlemen," cried he, "were the wounds made by the teeth of Captain Livingstone that night!—and foul fall the arm that could so slovenly have performed the duty of ridding the world of a tyrant. I it was who tried to take his worthless life, and nothing but the conscious guilt of a persecuting coward, conjuring up as his only foe the man he had most injured, could ever have confounded me with Mr. Ramsay."

"And do you dare to tell this in a court of justice?" exclaimed the president, starting to his feet, and drawing his sword in common with his brother officers. "Provost marshal, secure the doors!—Beat the guard to arms! Who are you, sir, that thus prove yourself guilty of the worst of crimes?"

The muscular intruder answered only by a glance of scorn, and folding his arms upon his breast, stood

quietly amid his mortal enemies, the very picture of confident defiance.

"Can no one tell me who this wretch is?" demanded the president, looking round the court. A name was whispered at the furthest corner of the cabin—caught up—repeated in a louder key—in louder still re-echoed—and then one thrilling tone resounding from every deck in the ship, announced to the startled president—"THE FLYING DUTCHMAN!"

"THE FLYING DUTCHMAN!" reiterated the president. "What! the chief of the mutineers? Seize him, seize him, guard!" addressing the file of marines, who, with fixed bayonets and hasty yet measured pace, now showed the head of their glittering column as it entered the cabin door.

"It is as idle now to dispute about names," said the daring man thus hemmed in, "as it is for you *gallant* officers, with forty armed men, to fear me who have no weapon. If I had not intended to surrender myself, I should hardly have ventured as much for an innocent man as I have this day. Marines, you will have little need for your bayonets, unless your superiors wish for the pleasure of seeing men slaughtered unresistingly. This only I wish to declare, that I was never able to prevail on Mr. Ramsay in any way to sanction our mutiny by deed or expression. The conversation reported by Pierson, as overheard between him and myself, was harmless on his side at least, and only parts of a very different whole, of which this is a more correct copy:" and he flung on the table a paper which contained the correct version as recorded in the eleventh chapter. "All the allurements I ever could hold out were unable for a moment to shake either his loyalty or honour. Now, then, having discharged my duty, I am ready for its reward."

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

"For good intent can be mysterious too."—HEYWOOD.

THE last tramp of the guard, as they marched off *The Flying Dutchman* heavily ironed to the prison cells on the middle deck had died away some seconds, before the equanimity of the court was sufficiently restored to enable them to decide on the course now rendered proper.

The first step was to exclude the public while they consulted as to the plan which ought to be adopted. This was accordingly done, and none having been left within the cabin but the members of the court themselves, the whole bearings of the subject were earnestly debated.

But nature waited for no forms, whatever ceremonies art might impose on man for the subjection of his fellows. The feelings of the bosom seemed, regardless of all other consideration, to overleap every barrier. Within a few minutes after the closing of the court, the husband, the wife, the father, the prisoner to be tried, and those who, though unfettered, had gone through, if possible, a yet more afflicting trial, were all locked in each other's arms.

But comparatively slight was the suspense now in store for them. The two hours' debate, which deeply occupied the court-martial, slipped swiftly by in that absorbing reunion; and when at length the prisoner was again placed at the bar, the president rose and addressed him.

"After a long and most impartial investigation of the various circumstances connected with this trial, and a most deliberate consideration of the confession by the wretched being now in custody of the provost marshal, I am happy in being, as president, the organ of the court to inform you that they do not think it necessary to call upon you for any defence of the crime with which you stand charged, but at once to pronounce you in every particular not guilty. In so doing, the extraordinary features of your case have led them to depart

from the strict forms ordinarily observed in the proceedings of courts-martial, in order to spare to an innocent individual any unnecessary suspense in transmitting the finding of the court to His Majesty for approval before promulgation.

"It is still more gratifying for me to be enabled to add, that the court deem you have ever held your duty and allegiance untainted, even in the midst of mutiny and disaffection; and that taking into consideration your redeeming conduct after your former trial by court-martial, and your late severe imprisonment, the court will humbly recommend to the consideration of his most gracious Majesty whether you might not be restored to your former rank, with credit to yourself and benefit to the service, as an example to all classes to maintain unsullied their loyalty and integrity under every temptation, in the firm confidence that their king and country will requite them at the last for every sacrifice. Provost marshal, you will discharge your late prisoner."

Stung, as we often are in this world, to the last pitch of human endurance, by sorrow and distress in every form, there is no one truth so valuable for its uses, so desirable to be remembered, or so frequently forgotten, as the quick succession which so often chances, of our brightest happiness upon our deepest woe—our severest trials upon our most prosperous fortunes. Everything in life forms a perpetual cycle; and to the reflecting mind this disposition of human affairs might almost seem moulded upon the form of the globe which bears The loftiest portion of the wheel must in some moment of its perpetual revolution bite the dust; and that which is thrust into the mire will still, at some period, however distant, ride supreme. How much of all that is good and beautiful in the human heart may be taught us by the simple lesson! From the one portion of it we learn forbearance—from the other we may gather fortitude.

But it is only the delightful, or rather dangerous lot of a comparative few, to pass from the depth of one position to the heights of the other, without any intermediate state; while, on the contrary, to how many thousand wretches does it not daily happen, to descend from all that was enviable to all that is the reverse—to estimate the blessings of life by their truest but most bitter test—that of their loss!

Happily for our friends, it is not to the shadows, but the lights of the picture, that we have now to turn our eyes. Harassed, persecuted in every direction, and fearing from the past the worst for the future, the appearance and avowal of the Flying Dutchman conveyed the utmost transport to the minds of Ramsay's wife and father. But if they thus rejoiced at learning the innocence of one so near to them, how infinitely were their transports increased by the sentence of the court-martial! Not only were they rejoiced that his character would be justified to the world by a bare acquital of his innocence, but that the reward of all his trials was at the same time proffered to him by the promised restoration which his unwearied integrity so well deserved.

As soon as they had all regained sufficient composure, they availed themselves of Ramsay's lately restored freedom, to be rowed together to the shore. Whoever has enjoyed the sudden transition from woe to happiness, may imagine the rapture with which the evening passed at the hotel of Ramsay's father; but that it might not be too unalloyed, and too cloying amid this world of sorrow, there was still one subject that awoke feelings of the strongest interest, if not pain:—this was the situation of the Flying Dutchman.

On the minds of all three the deepest impression had been made, by the self-devotion with which that mysterious individual had come forward to avow himself the intentional assassin, in order to screen from the

head of an innocent man that obloquy which ought to light on his own alone.

The question of who or what he could be, or what might be the cause of his deadly enmity against a man not seemingly belonging to his own grade of life, was a question that occurred to all, more especially to the mind of Ramsay's father. The fierce hatred proclaimed by those large and fiery eyes, the determined ferocity of the attack, the deadly spirit of revenge that characterised it, the cool and hardy adroitness that had so nearly completed his design, and, more than all, the unparalleled audacity with which it was avowed,—all combined to render the Flying Dutchman, with all his deadly crimes, an object of the deepest interest to those whose safety was owing to one of the few virtues that marked his chequered character. To the elder Ramsay more especially, hitherto unaccustomed to imagine the possibility of such a being, every anecdote that related to his character, every incident that in the son's recollection marked his eventful life, was an object of greedy curiosity and discussion. With the utmost excitement he listened to all the details relating to the mutiny, the setting Ramsay ashore, the taking of the frigate from the officers, the finding of the island, the laws and customs enforced in its policy; and he admired, with the fearful sentiment of regret, the rude but powerful genius, that now adapted itself to unusual legislation over the most lawless of his clan—and now to the conception of plans, snares adequate to deceive and capture the greatest proficients of the maritime profession. Shall we then blame him for sharing with Ramsay and his wife those emotions of sorrow which dimmed the joy of their own happiness, at remembering it was purchased by the sacrifice of the Flying Dutchman?

Long and eagerly they debated whether it might not be possible to avert this most imminent danger. Yet how could it be achieved—how could it even be expected? Here was a man openly avowing all the guilt

of a murderer, and joining to this the worst of crimes, successful perpetration of every other serious offence which the service recognised;—a successful mutineer, a lawless pirate; one in short, who had scrupled at no offence against the ordinary laws of society. With what pretence, then, could any of its members interfere to snatch him from its deserved punishment?—It was impossible. The only ground on which his impunity could be sought, was one that most condemned him—that of having come forward in his own person to avert the penalty of the law from the head of another, thereby acknowledging the justice of his own condemnation. Any other mode of assisting him was wholly beyond their power; and painful as the conviction was, they found that gratitude for his kindness was all that remained to console them for the danger their safety had imposed.

To this was added another source of uneasiness, to alloy their newly-formed happiness. Angela's fears too truly suggested that the commodore's hatred and persecution must have had its origin in the authority and instruction of her father. In the extreme ecstasy of her husband's acquittal, she had for a time forgotten that the claims of a parent were renewed upon her affections. Separated from him so long, and accustomed to believe in his death, as well as shaken in her filial tenderness by his harshness to Ramsay, he needed not to have been surprised at this result. Now, however, with the first moment of reflection, all the difficulties of her position presented themselves before her in startling reality. Not yet of age, and unconscious whether by the laws of the land she could establish the marriage with her husband, her heart was distracted between the duties owing to parental care, and those indissoluble ties which bound her to Ramsay, a separation from whom was in her eyes a doom far worse than death.

These various sources of annoyance and regret were,

however at once brought to a climax, by the receipt of the following letter:—

"The writer is informed that Mr. Ramsay's enemies are not yet satisfied with the defeat they have sustained; they still nourish hopes of completing that ruin to his happiness which they could not effect in his public fame. All their efforts will now be directed to deriding your marriage and offspring, as illegal and illegitimate, and tearing you from those arms which have shown themselves most worthy and capable of your protection. To effect this, the pretext used will be the parental authority of Captain Livingstone. As you value your happiness, resist this imposture to the last—he is *not* your father. More cannot be revealed at present, nor is it necessary. Should you be dared to the proof, challenge him to produce his certificate of marriage with your mother, and the register of your birth; these he may attempt to forge, or for them to substitute false papers; but that you may still possess the power of exposing the imposition, the original documents are enclosed.

"It is but too true that death deprived you in infancy of the tenderness of a mother, and misfortune still denies to your real father the happiness of owning you. Should a day arrive when this joy may be permitted him, it will be seized with all the avidity it deserves by one who asks for no greater happiness, nor dares even to hope for this.

"The real relationship which you do bear to Captain Livingstone is that of niece, your mother having been the sister of Captain Livingstone, and half-sister of Commodore Browne. From both she ever met the utmost unkindness, and her daughter would do well at once to defy and abjure every connection with so malevolent a quarter. On one point at least rest happy. The choice you have made in him who is to be the guide and guardian of your happiness, receives the utmost sanction which the sacred feelings of a father can bestow. Distress not yourself at the mystery that

surrounds *him* nor allow any idle curiosity to alloy those blessings already springing in your path. The less you seek to dispel the veil *he* places round you, the greater your chance of uninterrupted tranquillity. In the mean time he has no wishes but for your welfare —no prayers but for your good."

CHAPTER LXXXV.

My child is not my child.—VIRGINIUS.

THE first impulse of Ramsay, on hearing this extraordinary letter read, was to trace out, by the person who had brought it, some clue to the writer. But the measures of the latter had been too well taken. All the intelligence that could be gained from the waiters was the naked fact, that the communication in question had been delivered to them by some one in a seaman's garb, who saying that no answer was required, had immediately disappeared.

While they were all busy in vainly conjecturing who their mysterious correspondent might be, and what degree of reliance might be placed on his assertions, a violent altercation was heard on the principal staircase, and the name of Ramsay several times repeated.

"Ah!" exclaimed Angela, with instinctive horror, "there is the voice of that tyrannical wretch the commodore; do not let him enter."

In an instant Ramsay was on his feet; but his father, with the prudence of age, fearing some further unpleasantness, desired him to be seated, and went out to inquire into the cause of this fresh disturbance.

As Angela had said, the commodore was insisting on entering the apartment of our friends, which the waiters were strenuously opposing until they had announced his name. As he well knew this would amount to a total prohibition, he would by no means accede to this arrangement; and it was with some difficulty that Ram-

say's father induced him to enter a separate room. In singular confirmation of the mysterious letter they had just received, the commodore here announced his being sent, on the part of Captain Livingstone, to bring back his daughter Angela, who, being a minor and unmarried, he claimed still to retain in parental subjection.

"On the good taste of Captain Livingstone," replied the elder Ramsay, "in thus wrongfully insulting his daughter, I shall forbear comment; but pray beg him, Commodore Browne, to make himself perfectly easy on the score of her returning to Captain Livingstone's charge, as she is fully aware how unfounded are his claims on her filial obedience, and that, in fact. he is only her uncle. She is quite ready to admit the degree of relationship that really does exist between them as uncle and niece, and is perfectly willing to spare him the trouble of interesting himself further about one who is fully determined never to see him again. As to her marriage, she begs you will tell your relative that it has the entire approbation of her real parent, as well as that of her husband's family, and with this she is content."

On hearing this resolution of his niece, the rage of the commodore seemed only equalled by his surprise.

"So then," he exclaimed, "the mutinous scoundrel has let the secret out at last! There is one consolation for you in making your new connexion: not all your efforts can prevent your seeing her murdering scoundrel of a father hung at the yardarm."

"What, sir!" exclaimed the elder Ramsay; "I don't understand you."

"Oh, oh! then this dutiful daughter, it seems, has not told you the whole truth after all. I think she might have told you who her father was, when she announced his gracious consent to the marriage. Ha! ha! faith, that's not bad; his gracious consent indeed: I suppose she thought if she told you the whole truth, it would break off the match; but as she has left that for some one else to do, I'll supply the omission. This

generous parent—this consenting father—this eligible connexion, sir, which your son is now about to form, continued the commodore, with coarse and brutal raillery, as he observed the growing wonder depicted in the countenance of his listener—"who do you think this noble, virtuous, elevated being is?—Donald Campbell, the midnight assassin, the confessed murderer, the imprisoned felon, the mutinous marine, who now lies with a halter round his neck, and manacles on his feet, on board the guard-ship, where a few hours more will see him hanging from the yardarm—the boasted hero of a thousand rogueries—the *Flying Dutchman!*"

"The *Flying Dutchman!*" repeated the elder Ramsay, with the utmost surprise; "there must be some mistake here. Impossible! the thing is out of the question."

"Oh! I thought it would take you somewhat by surprise; but, however offensive, your vanity will find it only too true; the fellow has been an outlaw all his life. In the rebellion of 1745, he first became a traitor to his king for the sake of the miserable Pretender; and having, in an hour of ill fortune for our family, seduced the affections of my sister-in-law, whom he saw at Carlisle, he misled the unhappy girl into a private marriage, and, on the retreat of the rebels to their native caves and bogs, left her to perish in giving birth to a daughter. To conceal the disgrace of a connexion with such an outcast as much as possible, my brother has always owned this child, and, till within and up to the time of gaining the command of his frigate, successfully withheld her from all contamination with her mother's murderer. For some years after Culloden, the piratical scoundrel found subsistence in the navies of Holland and other states; till hearing, by some unfortunate chance, that his daughter was on board my brother-in-law's frigate, with his usual knavery and deceit he entered on board the frigate in the character of a marine; and, after a series of every atrocity, has gained at last the only re-

ward he ever merited—and which you will soon see him enjoy—that of the yardarm. Long as the time has been since my brother first saw him, the recognition of to-day in court was too perfect to leave any doubt of his identity. And now, sir, I wish you every joy of your new connexion, and the hereditary candour and honesty of your freshly acquired daughter-in-law, which have left it to a comparative stranger to give you these particulars."

As the commodore said this, he turned abruptly round and left the room, evidently under the impression that he had inflicted upon his listener the severest punishment and annoyance in his power.

Some minutes elapsed after his departure before the elder Ramsay could decide on the course most proper to be taken, after the extraordinary intelligence he had heard. A little reflection, however, determined him to communicate everything he had heard to his son, and then to leave the whole matter to his discretion, to pursue whatever course he should think fit.

Having, in accordance with this resolution, taken our hero aside, a long debate followed on the whole communication made by the commodore. Conjoining this with the mysterious letter they had received, the conclusion at which they arrived was, as nearly as possible, that which the real truth would have authorised, namely, that the father of Angela was indeed no other than the Flying Dutchman, who having, as an officer of the Pretender's army, privately married the mother of Angela, had been forced, by the misfortunes of the rebellion, to leave her at the moment that most required his care; and that having been long thwarted in his after endeavours to regain his child, he ultimately had recourse to the expedient of joining the ship that contained her, although in an inferior capacity. What his original views might have been on board that ship, it was impossible to divine, but that they related to the obtaining possession of his child they had no doubt, however these views might have been altered by after circumstances.

Of this at least Ramsay felt convinced, that she herself had been no party to any species of deception, and was still perfectly ignorant that the extraordinary being now in durance, under the title of "THE FLYING DUTCHMAN," had the slightest claim upon her affections. To this his father readily yielded his belief, not more from the opinion which his experience enabled him to form of her character, than from the internal evidence offered by the facts themselves.

Under these circumstances, they mutually resolved to keep her in the most strict ignorance of what the commodore had disclosed, and in the mean time address themselves to the consideration of what means, if any, remained to assist the singular but unfortunate man, the contradictory virtues in whose disposition gave birth to a feeling of compassion in their minds, independent of his near relationship to the lovely girl for whom they were so much interested, and in despite of the frightful crimes laid to his charge.

That he was the author of the mysterious letter they had shortly before received, they could not now doubt; for it was evident that he wished to bestow on his daughter all the happiness which it was in his power to secure to her, at the same time that every feeling dictated the policy of keeping from her knowledge, and that of those to whom she was now allied, every fact which could counteract their late access of happiness, or tend to degrade the image of a father in her eyes. Agreeing, then, to second him in all that was approvable, and to use their best endeavours to save from the penalty of his errors that life which he had freely volunteered to rescue the innocent, Ramsay and his parent returned to the presence of Angela.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor fetters curb the mind;
The soul will still its freedom take,
And leave your chains behind."—RALEIGH.

WHILE these, however, were the thoughts that agitated the friends of that singular being who had adopted the legendary horrors of THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, how and with what emotion was the same time passed by the object of all this hate, compassion, fear, and revenge? An hour had nearly elapsed since the period of midnight, and yet, heavily ironed hand and foot, the corporal, as we may still call him, paced to and fro his narrow den, his head as erect, his face as calm, his manner as composed, as when, the chief of the mutineers, he reigned the absolute and secure sovereign of Dutchman's Isle.

Owing to the number of prisoners on board, and the paucity of accommodation, his old lieutenant and favourite, Mustapha, shared with him the last confinement which his enemies alloted, before that more narrow and circumscribed space, the close-sewn, heavily-shotted hammock—the seaman's grave—that frail and insufficient protection from the monsters of the deep.

At first, Mustapha, as the most conspicuous ringleader of the mutiny in their possession, had been imprisoned alone; but when the great delinquent—the main offender—the chief criminal—*The Flying Dutchman*—had so daringly ventured within the spider's web, there was no choice between placing him with Mustapha, or Mustapha with several of his crew. The former alternative was chosen for that one night, and on the morrow they were to be separated.

It was easy to suppose, after all the dangers they had both gone through, that this fortuitous meeting between the chief and his old lieutenant was one of the greatest, as well as one of the most undesigned pleasures which it was in the power of their captors to bestow. In vain.

therefore, was an armed sentinel placed within their cell, as well as on the outside of it. This in no degree restrained the free intercourse between them.

The Flying Dutchman was naturally anxious to inquire by what infatuation of its defenders, his stronghold had fallen; and the generous-hearted Mustapha was equally glad, in this dark hour of peril, to receive the condolence of the shipmate who had carried him safely through more alarming perils.

Now, however, the corporal seemed to make no further resistance—to nourish no further hope of escape. Life, he said, had lost for him its great incentive; he had witnessed the achievement of the great object for which his last years had been endured, and he was well content to give to those he hated the valueless dregs of existence, for which he himself had no further occasion or regard.

Such was the tenor of the conversation on the part of the Flying Dutchman. That on the side of Mustapha differed but little;—he seemed to mourn, it is true, over the more amiable of those shipmates whom he had lost; but the thoughts of death were to him, as well as to his chief, wholly without that terror with which the weak have robed it.

To have heard them communing together that night, any indifferent person would have believed them to be two mild though uneducated philosophers, whose lives had been spent, it might be, in buffeting with the world, but who, guiltless of aught beyond the ordinary foibles of mankind, were preparing to lay down the burden of our nature with becoming dignity and contentment.

Where were the traces of bloodshed, cruelty, rapine and remorse, which should belong to the pirate and mutineer?—Nowhere were they to be seen, unless, perhaps, in the manacles with which their feet were bound.

Some thoughts like these, perchance, were busy in the brain of the unfortunate soldier who guarded them; for, not only did he offer no interruption to their free

communication, but some fellow feeling for the known situation which the Flying Dutchman had held as corporal of marines, gave to his deportment at once an air of interest in their discourse and sympathy for their situation.

The eagle eye of the corporal soon detected what was passing in his sentry's mind, and scarcely had the corporal of the watch visited their post to see that all was safe, and thereby insured an hour's respite from all interruption, when Mynheer produced from his pocket a most venerable and ancient 'bacco-box, well stored to boot, and first helping himself to a quid, and then giving one to Mustapha, he next offered the third to the sentry, saying, "Here, my boy, it's a pity you shouldn't have something to remember such illustrious prisoners by."

The marine, as was most natural, thanked his new friends for the tobacco, and they went on with their philosophical converse as before.

Now, the sentinel outside the cell was obliged, by the tenure of his office, to keep perpetually walking up and down; but the sentinel inside the cell was a man blessed in a supereminent degree; he had what might comparatively be termed "a patent office;" and as there was scarcely room for any one to stand, much less to walk, he was allowed to keep his vigil *more recumbente*—which meaneth resting on his haunches. Somehow or other it did happen—we don't pretend to say how—we simply aver the fact—within twenty minutes after the sentinel's acceptance of the Flying Dutchman's most generous quid, the head of the marine was seen first to give sundry sudden nods, from which he strove in vain to rouse himself, and then, finally, falling back against the gun on the carriage of which he was sitting, he quickly gave every symptom of deep and heavy slumber.

No sooner was this visible to the prisoners than off went the shoe of the Flying Dutchman, and from out of an orifice in the thick sole, the owner drew several finely-tempered steel saws, seemingly made of watch-

springs. Giving one to Mustapha, and taking one himself, they applied their most strenuous efforts to the iron grating that crossed the bow-port, and keeping up the same conversation they had been holding the whole of the watch, so that the sentry outside might not be alarmed, they soon contrived to force back enough of the iron to escape.

They now applied themselves to their manacles, and seemingly hopeless as the effort appeared, the Flying Dutchman brought into play a pecular twist, of which he seemed to possess the knack.* Joint after joint of the irons gave way, and the mutineers stood once more on the deck, comparatively free men.

"Now then, my boy," said Mustapha to his companion, pointing to the open port, "let's cut and run with all expedition."

"Stay a moment," replied the Flying Dutchman, "if we leave that poor devil," pointing to the sentinel "in that condition, he'll be shot for our escape, before he is twenty-four hours older."

"It is rather hard," said Mustapha; "but how are we to help it? As Schacabac said to the cadi, some men are born to these things, and so I suppose he was. I too would willingly help the poor devil if I could; but I don't see how we are to manage it."

"I do though," said the Flying Dutchman; "look here."

Going up to the marine, the Flying Dutchman held his hands round the soldier's windpipe, ready to suppress the slightest noise, if he should awake; and then whispering Mustapha to take his neckcloth and tie his arms behind him, the old seaman did so.

"Now off with mine, and tie his legs." This also was obeyed.

The corporal then took the files he had been using,

* That this depends upon skill, and not strength, will be seen at once from the facts recorded in the *Newgate Calendar* of Jack Sheppard's escape.

and over the right temple made a long incision, from which the blood flowed freely.

During this time, the strong opiate contained in the medicated tobacco, and which had all but poisoned the unfortunate marine, held his senses in such complete abeyance, that not even a single movement betrayed a sensibility of the mutineers' proceedings. No sooner were these completed than Mustapha forced his way through the severed grating, and getting hold of the casing that ran from the scuppers on the deck above, slid rapidly and swiftly down into the water. The Flying Dutchman was not slow in imitating his example, and while he hung outside the port with one hand, by an extraordinary effort of his immense personal strength he contrived, with the other, to thrust back the irons that had been severed, until the grating scarcely bore any appearance of having been at all tampered with, and then joined his companion below.

At this time the tide was running out of the harbour, at the rate of between four and five miles an hour. Barely supporting themselves, therefore, in the water, and without the least attempt to swim, the mutineers allowed their persons to be drifted out into the Sound, merely using the slight exertion necessary to direct them to the vessel which was waiting to receive the daring chief off Cremil Point.

Arrived here, however, some caution was necessary. Both the harbour and Sound were crowded with ships of war, and the Flying Dutchman too well knew how difficult would be any open attempt to escape, the moment their absence should be discovered on board the guard-ship, and the alarm given. The only step, therefore, which they dared to take, was the cutting of their cable, and allowing their small craft quickly to drift out to sea, past Barnpool, and towards the reef of rocks called the Bridge. Here the danger lay. They made enough sail to steer over the reef, and this she was not long in doing. The night breeze blew steadily

off the land, and before half an hour had elapsed, Penlee Point was beginning to fade in the horizon to windward.

Snatched from the very jaws of a most disgraceful death, we may easily believe how sincere was the ecstacy of the mutineers in this their last escape from not the least of their dangers.

"Here," said the Flying Dutchman, "laying his hands on the broad shoulder of old Mustapha—"here ends my share of the perils of the sea. We are going to a land where they know no ill of me, and where it shall be my task that none is ever known. I have a shot in the locker for a friend, though I little expected one to share it so agreeable to my feelings as yourself. This escape I planned when I saw the necessity of saving Mr. Ramsay. What I have you are welcome to share, and in so doing, you will not only divide but double its enjoyment."

"Corporal," quoth Mustapha, "as the hunchback said to the sultan, that's a bargain. There are some things, both in your life as well as mine, that we sha'n't do amiss, perhaps, to repent of; and, by all that I can see, we are now likely to have a little time for it."

"True—too true," muttered the corporal, seizing the hand that was extended to him, and looking up towards the heavens; "but if part of our lives has been given to work evil, there may be yet a large space left for us in which to do good."

As the mutineers came to this conclusion, broad bright flashes, illuminating the distant horizon, and followed by the dull booming of heavy guns, proclaimed to the fugitives that their flight was discovered.

"Ay, you may search," quoth the corporal, as the sounds struck on his ear, "but it's all too late. Mustapha, my boy, the greatest danger is escaped, and, thank Heaven, without the loss of a single life. If that sentry keeps his own council as well as we put him up to it, he'll be all right; they'll be sure to think we

struck him senseless at a single blow; and if we are to seek out in times to come what good we can effect, the best earnest of the future lies in this beginning which has just passed."

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

"He left a name at which the world turns pale,
To point a moral, and adorn a tale."—JOHNSON.

LITTLE more of our history now remains to be told. The confusion that prevailed on board the flag-ship, on discovering the escape of the principal mutineer—that object on which so much judicial vengeance was to be wreaked—may easily be imagined. When two days passed, and no tidings were heard of the fugitives, and every attempt of their apprehension had failed, the authorities endeavoured, by their utmost efforts, to hush up the particulars of their escape.

Some of the minor criminals still remained in their power; these, being tried for the mutiny, were hung with all due form, and some little mystification was used, to lead the populace into the belief, that the leaders of the mutiny had perished among them.

Partly owing to this, and partly to that love of the marvellous which always distinguishes the crowd,* a story got abroad, which easily obtained belief, and became the foundation of the legend that may be traced to this very day in those districts—namely, that the Flying Dutchman was but an incarnation of the spirit of evil, and that human chains and bars being insufficient to bind him, he left nothing behind but his cloven foot, which was found in the iron manacles next morning, after he had escaped, with his chief mate, back to

* In singular corroboration of this propensity, we may mention the legend still believed near Portsmouth, that *Admiral Byng* was never shot, but a stuffed effigy of the murdered admiral.

those latitudes were the terror-stricken sailors, in the tempest, and the gloom, still aver that his shadowy sail is seen.

As for Ramsay and Angela, the sun of their fortunes had now reached the meridian; the mists of the morning were all happily dispelled, and its orb continued to shine bright and unclouded to the setting.

Rank and emolument followed Ramsay in the service; for his Majesty, having been pleased to confirm the finding of the court-martial, rewarded him with both pardon and promotion for the past, and employment for the future; thereby giving to the service an ornament it could ill have afforded to lose, and marking, as became the fountain-head of justice, his strong sense of the shameful manner in which her sacred right had been invaded.

Captain Livingstone's fate, however, exhibited the reverse of the picture in every respect. The scandalous circumstances under which he had set Ramsay ashore on a desert island becoming known to his royal master, he received a message either to resign his commission or stand a court-martial. Prudence was the leading virtue of Captain Livingstone's character; he chose the former alternative, and passed his life in just that degree of estimation which his deeds had so fully earned for him.

In after years, there was occasionally seen at Ramsay's house a tall powerful old man, whose high cheek bones, silver hair, and piercing eyes, marked no ordinary countenance. Noted for the unceasing efforts which he made to accomplish the happiness of those around him, he was, nevertheless distinguished for an air of the deepest and most unceasing melancholy, and the studious reserve with which he courted solitude.

That some near and venerated tie connected this individual with the family of our hero was evident; but all efforts to draw from him any explanation of that in which it consisted, was futile. Now and then, it is true, he seemed to be aware of former passages in Ramsay's

life; but no sooner had he committed himself thus far, than a fit of abstraction seemed at once to lock up his recollection and his speech; while those who had betrayed him to this point, rarely or ever had an opportunity of prosecuting their inquiries; since his visits were few and far between, and any attempt to pry into the mystery that surrounded him seemed the signal for his sudden disappearance.

By degrees, longer intervals elapsed between the periods of his being seen, and at last he came no more. Even Ramsay himself grew either forgetful or reserved on those passages which had formed the earlier part of his naval life; willing, seemingly, to accelerate the progress of Old Time, in rendering more and more faint the traces of his connection with 'THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.'

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